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THE DOCTRINES AND DIFFICULTIES OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH
CONTEMPLATED FROM THE STANDING GROUND AFFORDED
BY THE CATHOLIC DOCTRINE OF THE BEING OF
OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

BEING

The Hulsean Lectures

FOR THE YEAR M.DCCC.LV.

BY

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TO

EDWIN GUEST, ESQ. LL.D.

MASTER OF GONVILLE AND CAIUS COLLEGE,

LATE VICE-CHANCELLOR.

TO

THE REVEREND WILLIAM WHEWELL, D.D.

MASTER OF TRINITY COLLEGE,

AND TO

THE REVEREND RALPH TATHAM, D.D.

MASTER OF ST JOHN'S COLLEGE,

THESE LECTURES

DELIVERED BY THEIR APPOINTMENT

ARE RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.



THE REV. JOHN HULSE, M.A., by his will bearing date July 21, 1777, founded a Lectureship in the University of Cambridge, to be held by a Clergyman in the University of the degree of Master of Arts, and under the age of forty years: the Lecturer to be elected annually on Christmas-day, or within seven days after, by the Vice-Chancellor, the Master of Trinity College, and the Master of St John's College, or any two of them: the subject of the Lectures to be as follows: "The evidence of Revealed Religion; the Truth and Excellence of Christianity; the Prophecies and Miracles; direct or collateral proofs of the Christian Religion, especially the collateral arguments; the more difficult texts, or obscure parts of Holy Scripture;" or any one or more of these topics, at the discretion of the Lecturer.

PREFACE.

THE description of the subject of these Lectures, given upon the title-page, must not be taken as intended to imply, that I have attempted to discuss all doctrines and all difficulties. My purpose has been rather to exhibit a point of view, from which, as I believe, doctrines and difficulties can be most successfully contemplated, to illustrate by a certain number of examples the method of regarding divine truth proposed, and to suggest the application of it in others. It seems to me to be practically much more important to have found the right point from which to look at difficulties, than to be supplied with ingenious theories for getting over them; it is well to know, that certain objections against the doctrines of the Faith have been answered, but it is still better to be in the habit of contemplating the doctrines from a point of view, from which the difficulties are not perceived, not felt to *be* difficulties. Herein consists, as I conceive, the true value of Butler's Analogy, as compared with books of evidences in general, that it supplies us with a method of dealing with a whole class of objections, all those, namely, which are analogous to objections capable of being raised against the ordinary course of nature; and the mind, which has once gained the point of view, which forms the

basis of Bishop Butler's work, is led to perceive, that a great number of apparently plausible difficulties require only to be looked at steadily from that point, in order to be recognised as belonging to a class, which ought not to torment the mind of a Christian, and which an opponent of the faith parades in vain.

This then is the *idea* of the following course of Lectures; and I beseech the reader—and the critics—to consider them according to their idea, and so only. The subjects of the several Lectures have no party character; they are not discussed in support of any party views; they are treated, as in the sight of God, with reference to the spiritual need of those—whether High Church, Low Church, or to whatever school they may fancy themselves to belong—who may have been led by sad experience to fear, lest the sun of their souls should be hidden from them by any of the mists and clouds which belong to an intellectual age. By such persons I confidently trust that I shall not be misunderstood; and to them I heartily commend the Lectures, with the conviction, that I shall have carried out the intention of the Founder in ordering them to be printed, if the vision of Jesus Christ shall have been made clearer to any one doubting soul.

H. G.

CAMBRIDGE,

December, 1855.

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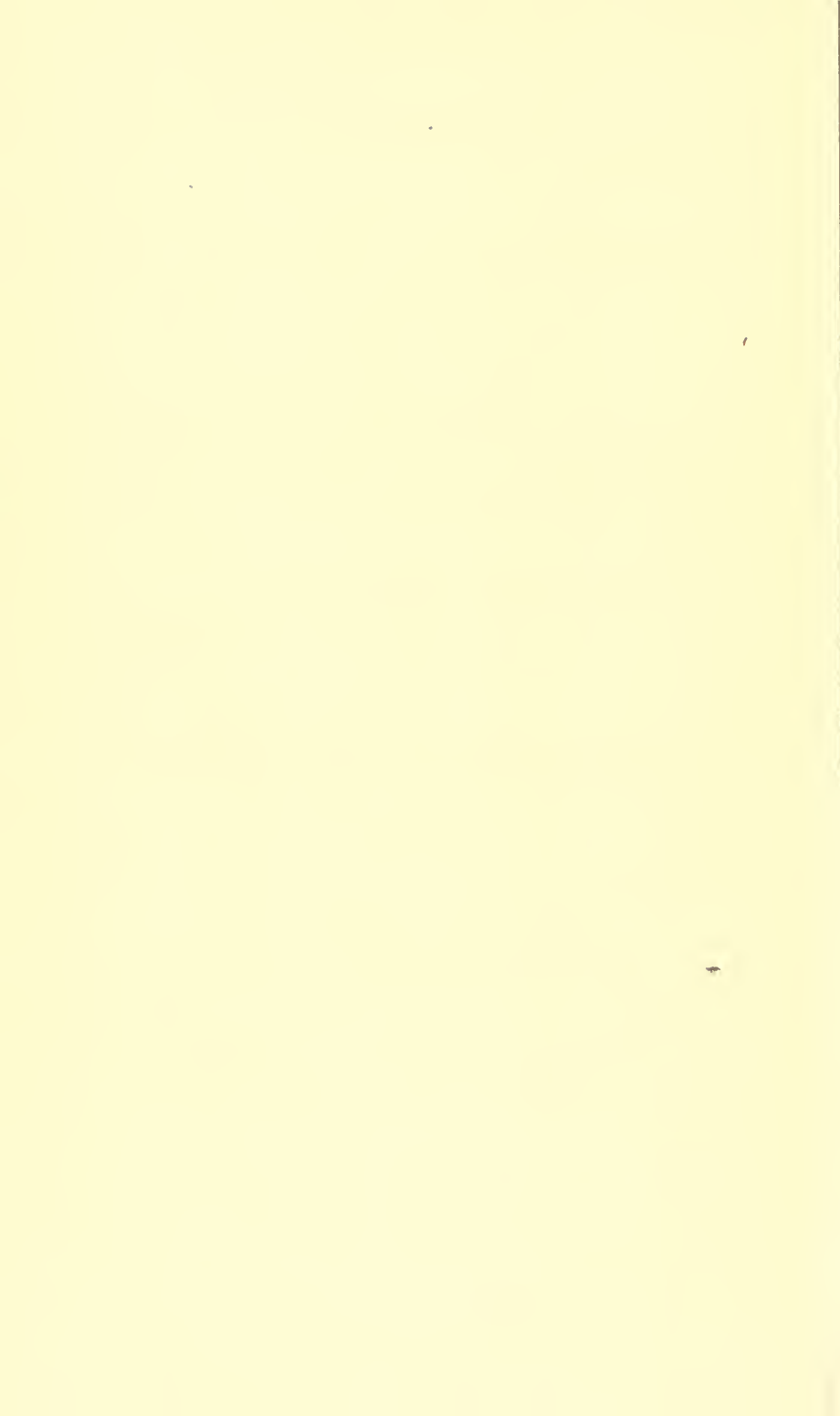
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LECTURE I.

INTRODUCTORY.

Preached on Palm Sunday.

I. CORINTHIANS II. 2.

I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.

IN entering upon the duties of the office, in virtue of which I occupy this pulpit to-day, I must LECT.
I. crave your attention while I explain the view which I have been led to take of the nature of those duties, and the plan which I propose to pursue in the fulfilment of them.

The great aim of Mr Hulse in his various benefactions would seem to have been this, to provide that the momentous question of the evidences of the Christian faith should be continually and systematically brought under the notice of the members of this University; and that so the worldly wealth which God had given him might be made instrumental to the propagation of the truth throughout the land, of which Cambridge is one of the spiritual centres. The circumstances of the times in which Mr Hulse lived will to a certain extent account for the fact, that a man wishing to do something after his decease for the glory of God should choose this manner of doing it: for the scheme for his various benefactions was

LECT.
I.

matured at an epoch* at which infidelity had attained to a very extraordinary and alarming prominence: not only those views of religion, which may in a certain, though not very strict, sense be called speculative, had been by many rejected, but the practical rules of purity and holiness, with which we usually connect the epithet Christian, had been by not a few set aside under cover of the supposed disproof of the truth of revealed religion. We find Bishop Butler describing the temper of the infidelity of those times in such words as these: "All of those who reject Christianity (he writes in the conclusion of the *Analogy*) do not content themselves with a bare neglect of religion, and enjoying their imaginary freedom from its restraints. Some go much beyond this. They deride God's moral government of the world. They renounce His protection, and defy His justice. They ridicule and vilify Christianity and blaspheme the Author of it; and take all occasions to manifest a scorn and contempt of revelation." And we find the same writer speaking in another place of "a certain fearlessness, with regard to what may be hereafter under the government of God," which characterized the age in which he lived, and which, as he truly remarks, nothing could justify, but "an universally acknowledged demonstration on the side of atheism." It is not wonderful that a thoughtful man should consider, that he would be doing good service both to God and to his country,

Vol. I.
p. 295.
Oxford Ed.
1844.

Vol. I. p.
45.

See Note I.

* The date of Mr Hulse's will is July 21, 1777. A full account of it, and of all Mr Hulse's foundations, will be found in the introduction to Mr Parkinson's Hulsean Lectures for the year 1837.

if being dead he could yet speak against such a spirit of infidelity as this. LECT.
I.

When however the University accepted a foundation, which was intended to give a permanent character to the consideration of Christian Evidences, it must undoubtedly have been under the persuasion, that she was not providing merely for a present emergency, but possessing herself of the means of effectively directing attention to a question of perennial and inexhaustible interest. Nor can such a persuasion be deemed erroneous: for it is to be observed, that although the Christian faith be ever objectively one and the same, yet the manner of apprehending it, and the mode of substantiating its claims, will vary extremely from one age to another. The grounds of faith being moral, it is impossible to reduce the whole subject to a string of definite propositions, to be demonstrated with mathematical precision, and then never to be questioned again. It may be possible to lay down certain rules of a lasting character, as to the general method and principles of dealing with evidences; and certain classes of objections may be so thoroughly exploded, as never to be able to shew their faces any more; but still the question, What reason shall I give for the faith that is in me? must ever be one, the answer to which will vary from one time to another, and will depend not only upon the objections made, but also upon the character of the mind to which the objections are offered.

Necessity
for adapt-
ing evi-
dences to
the re-
quirements
of the
times.

And so perhaps in reviewing old methods of defending the faith against aggression, we may be led to look upon some of them with the same kind See Note 2.

LECT. I. of feelings with which we regard the armour which our forefathers used: unable, it may be, to defend the wearer against modern missiles, but to be revered, nevertheless, as memorials of noble champions, and as proofs of the zeal with which they contended in their days for the faith once delivered to the saints.

It has been intended therefore, that as the progress of years produces new phases of the question of the truth of the revelation of God to us in Jesus Christ, so attention should be given to the changes necessary in the manner of presenting the Christian argument, and that the defensive armour of Christian soldiers should be adapted to the offensive weapons of the times.

Different
views of
evidences
taken by
different
persons.

But, as I have said, not only do the objections made to the Christian faith vary from one time to another, but also at the same period the manner in which the faith will be apprehended, and the effective cogency of objections made to it, will be very different for different persons: age, natural temperament, early education, the line of study adopted by a man, his moral habits, the character of his companions, and many other circumstances which might be mentioned, will all have their influence upon his mind with reference to the great question of belief in Christ. I notice this point, however, not for the sake of pursuing the subject just now into its consequences, but because I would remark that the frequent change of the person holding the office of Hulsean Lecturer may perhaps be regarded as useful, with reference to this view of the subject with which he has to deal; and at all events the short tenure of the office can

hardly fail to suggest, that the duties are most LECT.
I.
likely to be profitably performed, if the Lecturer endeavours to put before his hearers that kind of view, which to his own mind has been most satisfactory, or to clear the faith from any class of difficulties, of which he has himself experienced the force. Upon this principle therefore I myself propose to act: and in that view of our holy religion, which it will be the purpose of my course of Sermons to present, I shall endeavour to describe that which has given to my own mind a refuge from many spiritual difficulties; I shall not attempt to represent it as the only view, nor will I undertake to say that there may not be other lines of argument to some persons much more satisfactory; but I shall indulge the thought, that amongst those who listen to me there may be some, who will be able to find a light to their paths in a view of the subject, which I have found to be a light to my own.

I have just now spoken of a course of *Sermons*, and have done so advisedly. The will of the founder specifies a course of *sermons*; and I have taken occasion for once to use this name, rather than the more usual name of *Lectures*, because I wish to mark, that according to my apprehension, there need not be any essential difference between the tone assumed by the Hulsean Lecturer, and that assumed by other preachers: a lecture upon Christian Evidences is too apt to suggest to our minds the thought of a discussion with an infidel, with one who is prepared to dispute with us *ex animo* every step we take, and in arguing with whom no weapons may be used but those of the most rigid logic,—a person to be

Hulsean
Lectures
properly
Sermons.

LECT.
I.

subdued and silenced by argument, not to be encouraged and supported by those who have a message for the weary and heavy laden. And I am not at all desirous to hint, that the coldest and driest investigation of religious truth may not have its value, or to insinuate that he who has constructed a system of evidences with reference to some particular class of objections, which in the minds of all reasonable men demolishes those objections, has done anything but good service to the Church; but I think that before a congregation, not of infidels but of Christians, assembled in a place like this, not to argue but to listen, there are modes of treating the evidences of our faith more appropriate and more practically useful. Why should I forget—nay, what right have I to forget—that those who are here present have this day repeated such words as these?

I believe in Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, Begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, Begotten not made, Being of one substance with the Father, By whom all things were made—

—that I am therefore speaking to those, who have declared themselves Christians in the fullest Catholic sense of the word, and who might be justly indignant if I were to question their title to be recognized as disciples of Christ? No—whatever is uttered within these walls by me shall, by God's help, be of the nature of a sermon to Christians, tending to stablish them in a faith which they already hold, and not of the nature of a lecture, which assumes the truth of Christ to be

an open question, or of an argument directed to
 professed unbelievers.

LECT.
I.

If it be said that thus to deal with the subject is to make lectures upon evidences superfluous, it may be replied, that although the field be contracted by the consideration, that the lectures are to be of the nature of sermons addressed to a Christian congregation, there is still abundance of room left for useful and not illogical treatment of the subject. For the Christian faith being, as I have said, incapable of being cut up into a string of propositions and demonstrated once for all, a real believer in Christ may sometimes have his faith shaken, at least for a time, by some new view of the subject, with which a new course of reading or a new line of thinking may have made him acquainted. The person whose faith is thus shaken, may have no desire to doubt concerning the truth of Christ; there may be no impure and immoral root to his speculative difficulties; he may be simply unable to see the answer to objections, with which as an educated man he must be conversant; and he may feel a kind of dishonesty in professing with his mouth the creed of his baptism, while he is cognizant of what seem to him to be grave objections to the truth of what he professes. The intellectual difficulties, which a Christian thus encounters, are in a certain sense the price which he pays for freedom of thought, and for the privilege of study: an ignorant person will be safe from the pains and struggles which such difficulties involve; and if a man be ignorant, merely because he has been placed by God's providence in a position, in which the acquisition of

Utility of
such ser-
mons, and
the proper
aim of
them.

LECT.
I.

S. Luke vi.
20.

knowledge has been rendered impossible by the necessity of labouring for daily bread, one might perhaps without blame venture to assign to such a man a portion of that blessing which Christ gave when He said, *Blessed be ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of God*; for indeed there is frequently in the simple faith of unlettered persons, who have sat at Jesus' feet and heard His words, a substance, a truth, and a life, which men of profounder knowledge upon other subjects may well be content to envy; but if our lot be thrown in the world of thought rather than in the world of labour, we must walk worthy of our vocation; we may not offer up the powers which God has given us, as a Moloch sacrifice to Him who delights in truth; and if opportunities of knowing be also made occasions of doubting, then the doubts must be grappled with, and in the strength of God overcome. And I do not know that a Christian minister can desire any more blessed office, for there is none more like that of the holy angels, than to succour his brethren in spiritual conflicts, and help to stablish them in the faith.

These Lectures designed chiefly for oral delivery,

I would remark further, that in the choice of a subject it seems right to take into consideration the fact, that although the Lecturer is bound both to preach and also to print a course of sermons, yet the former method of teaching would appear to be that which ought to be borne chiefly in mind. The existence of a twin foundation, the purpose of which is the annual publication of a book bearing upon the evidences of the faith, would alone appear sufficient to shew, that it is for the

Lecturer to select such topics for his discourses as can best be treated orally, while he leaves to the Christian Advocate those subjects, the discussion of which is adapted for a book rather than for the pulpit, comprehended more easily through the medium of the eye than through that of the ear. And I make this observation in this opening sermon, because it is obvious, that as certain subjects are almost incapable of being treated successfully in the pulpit, assuming perhaps an acquaintance with books which many of the audience have not, or requiring frequent reference to preceding parts of the argument and the like, and as such subjects are sometimes most interesting and instructive when studied in a book by those whose taste and knowledge lead them to the study, and most dry and uninteresting when merely listened to from the pulpit by a mixed congregation; so contrariwise there *are* subjects, which are specially fit for the pulpit, which gain instead of losing by oral treatment, which are better in sermons than in books. A preacher may not use bad reasoning, and substitute rhetoric for logic; but he may very well appeal to something besides the reason, and rely upon something in man's moral being lying deeper than his intellectual faculties; and such an appeal certainly comes with the greatest force, when it is addressed by the living voice to the hearts of living men.

This leads me also to say, that I think myself justified in the discharge of the duties of my office, in holding in view especially the spiritual wants of the younger members of the University. The conflict of faith with the intellectual difficulties

and addressed especially to young persons.

LECT.
I.

which lie in its way is peculiarly a conflict for young men. Children are in happy ignorance of difficulties, and can find a sure pathway of peace in the practical piety of obedience. Men of mature age, on the other hand, are for the most part fixed in faith as in stature, and have a religious character formed for evil or for good; so that to them a course of sermons on evidences, though they may be a matter of interest, can scarcely be felt to involve questions of life and death. But the young man has his religious character to form, and the grounds of his faith to settle: much as he may feel the truth of the principle, that in order to know the reality of Christ's doctrine he must do God's will, he still feels that the peace of his soul and even his sense of honesty require, that he should be able to give a reasonable account of his faith. He finds, perhaps, that truths, which he had been taught from his childhood to hold as sacred, are assailed; and not only so, but that in the form in which he has hitherto held them, some of them seem to be only too easily assailable. He meets with men, who tell him that the Bible is in conflict with modern science; that a miracle is a thing incredible; that the creeds of Christendom are tinged with Jewish superstitions and oriental fancies, and require to be purged; that Christianity is true, only as many other religious systems are true, that is, as embodying a certain amount of universal religious truth; and that it, like others, will gradually make way for new and clearer expressions of that which is eternal and divine. And he finds the same views echoed in books; and that not in books which profess to ridicule what is holy,

S. John
vii. 17.

and which therefore he might be ashamed to read; but in books which assume a character of high religious spiritualism, and which make it the very gravamen of their charge against the faith of Christians, that it is not pure and spiritual enough. It is probably the lot of the greater number of thoughtful young men in these days to undergo a conflict, such as that which I have described; and God and good angels and their own hearts best know the pain which such conflicts sometimes occasion: many a young man would gladly shun the strife, if he knew how; he would willingly shut up all books of cold dry evidences, while in the strength of early teaching his heart should declare its allegiance; he would be thankful if his thoughts could ever find their genuine utterance in such words as these:

Sun of my soul! Thou Saviour dear,
It is not night if Thou be near:
Oh! may no earthborn cloud arise,
To hide Thee from Thy servant's eyes.

LECT.
I.
See Note 3.

Christian
Year.

These exquisite lines express a tone of feeling, which I believe that many a young man will confess that he once had, and which he would give worlds to have again.

And may not the peace of simple faith be regained by him, who on coming to the age of serious thought has felt the pressure of the intellectual difficulties belonging to the times, in which God has been pleased to cast his lot? Beyond doubt it may; and I am most anxious to state as clearly, and admit as fully, as possible, the reality of the conflict, and the almost necessity in these days of enduring it, in order that anything which

LECT. I. may be said hereafter may have the advantage of
 ———— being received by those who are engaged in the
 See Note 4. strife, as the words of one who sympathizes with
 them, and who would willingly minister to their
 wants.

An illustration
 from the
 story of
 the Trans-
 figuration.

S. Luke ix.
 34, 35, 36.

In leaving this part of the subject let me add,
 that the mental history of many young persons
 may perhaps be seen typified, in a somewhat
 striking manner, in the experience of those three
 disciples, who were permitted to see Christ trans-
 figured in the mount. As these disciples talked
 with Jesus, we read that *a cloud overshadowed*
them, and they feared as they entered into the cloud;
but there came a voice out of the cloud, saying,
This is my beloved Son, hear Him; and *when the*
voice was past, Jesus was found alone. And so I
 believe, that although a cloud, “an earthborn
 cloud,” may in these days overshadow some of
 the disciples, who hold converse with their Lord
 and are even highly favoured above their brethren,
 and although they may well fear as they feel the
 chill cloud coming over them, and hiding the Sa-
 viour from their eyes, yet if they listen they will
 hear a voice through the cloud, proclaiming *the*
beloved Son; and that then the cloud will pass
 away, and Jesus will be *found alone*, the one ob-
 ject of their faith and love, *the Way, the Truth,*
and the Life.

S. John
 xiv. 6.

Subject
 proposed.

I will now explain the nature of the subject,
 which I propose to treat in this course of Sermons.
 I have already said, that I shall take it as a fun-
 damental principle, that I am exhorting Christians,
 not arguing with infidels; in the words of the text,

I have *determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ*. I propose, therefore, that we should take our stand upon the Catholic doctrine of the being of our Lord, and that from the elevation so given us we should make a survey of some of the doctrines and attendant difficulties of the Christian faith. Instead of regarding this great cardinal doctrine as a proposition to be proved, which however is obviously a legitimate course of proceeding, I shall look upon it as the great postulate of the faith; and if we find that the assumption brings a variety of phenomena into connexion with each other, and gives consistency to other doctrines, and illuminates a thousand difficulties, we may perhaps be led by the examination to an increased conviction, that the postulate is one granted by God Himself. Instead of travelling in search of Christ, like the wise men from the East, who, following the flickering light of a star, asked where Christ should be born, I would rather (so to speak) take you at once to the summit of Calvary, and say, "This is Christ the King! stand reverently by the side of His cross, and contemplate the world from thence."

LECT.
I.

Some of the doctrines and attendant difficulties of the Christian faith surveyed in the light of the Catholic doctrine of the being of Christ.

S. Matt. ii.

The method, which it is thus proposed to adopt, may be illustrated by reference to the modes of exhibiting the evidences of the truths of science. If it be required to make a student believe in that most mysterious, and to an untaught mind almost incredible, doctrine of physics, the universal gravitation of matter, there are two courses which may be conceived to be adopted. We may either discuss a variety of phenomena, and from them endeavour by a process of induction gradually to ascend

Illustrated by reference to scientific methods.

LECT.
I.

to the great principle which harmonizes them all; or we may, and in the present state of science may justly, assume the great principle, and from it deduce its consequences; and then, by shewing how the assumption of the principle explains the phenomena of nature and solves its difficulties, we may rest in the conclusion, that the assumption itself was true. Now it appears to me, that this latter mode of proceeding is the clearest and best method of conveying truth; and that it is one, which will be almost instinctively followed by a teacher, who has no doubt in his own mind concerning the truth of his doctrines, and therefore feels sure that they have only to be seen from the right point of view in order to be heartily received. If I may venture so to speak, the Catholic doctrine of the being of Christ is to the spiritual world something like that which the doctrine of the universal gravitation of matter is to the physical: both are mysterious; and one perhaps as hard to believe as the other, when contemplated as a solitary naked dogma; but one like the other is received with full assurance of faith, when it is found that each in its own sphere is the true centre of the universe, and each the key of divine mysteries.

An objection obviated.

Nor can it be rightly deemed an objection to the course proposed, that it is the very mode, according to which our mothers taught us our first lessons concerning Christ. On the other hand, I feel persuaded, that the manner in which children learn the lessons of the faith does not in maturer years require to be altogether set aside, but rather needs only a proper scientific development, in order

to fit it for use when they have put away childish things. Is it not in fact sometimes, because young men forget the teaching of the Church Catechism, that they find themselves in religious difficulties? The Church Catechism, laying the foundation of its teaching in this, that the child has been "made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven," bids it rehearse the articles of its belief; and then instructs the child, that in those articles it learns to believe in God the Father who made us, in God the Son who redeemed us, and in God the Holy Ghost who sanctifies us—a noble creed, if ever there was one:—the Catechism does thus base the child's spiritual life upon the great cardinal facts of God's love, facts which are almost self-demonstrated by being thus capable of being revealed to babes, facts for prince and peasant, facts upon which the simplest men have lived and set rare examples of duty towards God and duty towards their neighbours, and which at the same time the wisest and most thoughtful of mankind have accepted as the clearest revelation of the wisdom and power of God. And the Church Catechism does not do this: it does not commence with such a principle as that "the Bible, and the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants," and so make it necessary to clear away all critical and historical difficulties from each of the ancient records, the aggregate of which we call the Bible, before it can permit the child in the true spirit of philosophy to eat of the bread of life: it does not puzzle the child with hard questions concerning the nature of inspiration and the like: it tells the

LECT.
I.

See Note 5.

LECT. I. child what God has said and what He has done, leaving it to be settled afterwards, if necessary, how God has spoken and how He has acted.

Plan of the
Lectures
restated.

I repeat then, that the plan of my lectures will be this: I propose that we take our stand upon the great Catholic doctrine of the being of our Lord Jesus Christ, as set forth in the Creeds of the Church, and that from the point of view so gained we contemplate some of the doctrines and accompanying difficulties of the Christian religion. Successive sermons will form successive applications of the same principle; and though one thread of reasoning will run through them all, yet the plan proposed will enable me to satisfy that condition, which is desirable in all courses of sermons, and quite necessary when the beginning and end are separated by an interval of some months, namely, that the sermons shall be separately intelligible.

And I trust, by God's help, that I may be able to make the course of sermons such as, according to the expression used in the will of the founder, "shall shew the evidence for revealed religion, and demonstrate in the most convincing and persuasive manner the truth and excellence of Christianity;" and yet not desert the ground announced in my text, the only ground upon which any preacher of the Gospel can safely stand, namely, the determination to know nothing among Christians, save Jesus Christ. Nor would I desire to exclude from the motto of my sermons the concluding words of the text, *and Him crucified*; for, in truth, whether we regard the Lord Jesus Christ as having come into this world to do God's will, or as having taught us by His example how we should serve

Mr Hulse's
Will.

Him and offer up our bodies, souls, and spirits, a living sacrifice, or in whatever other way we contemplate His work upon earth, so much turns upon the mysterious fact of His human death, that we may say that to know Christ is impossible unless we know Him as crucified. And especially on a day like this, when we have entered upon the week of the Passion, and are about to commemorate, day after day, those last solemn scenes of our Saviour's life, and above all the solemn scene on Calvary, I should feel it to be altogether out of keeping with the spirit of the season, to speak to you of Christ, and not to speak of Him emphatically as *Christ crucified*.

Allow me therefore to say in conclusion, that a course of sermons, such as that proposed, could not commence at a fitter season than this. Indeed the season itself may be said to symbolize the principle of discerning Christian truth, which I have endeavoured in this introductory Lecture to lay down, and which I hope hereafter to illustrate. I wish to begin with Passion week: not to contemplate the cross of Christ in the distance, as something which may perchance be reached after a weary pilgrimage, if we do not faint by the way; but to regard it as our Christian privilege, to take our stand at once upon Calvary, and view the promised land from thence. And I feel confident that Christ thus apprehended, will approve Himself, as He did to the men of S. Paul's days, to be neither a stumblingblock nor foolishness, but the very wisdom and power of God; nor can I doubt but that He will in these days make true to truehearted men that promise, which He spake in the days

LECT.
I.Conclu-
sion.1 Cor. i. 23,
24.

LECT.
I.S. Matt. xi.
28, 29.

of His flesh, that the weary and heavy laden who come to Him shall be able in Him to find rest for their souls. Each age of the Church has its own peculiar burdens; and they, whose lot is cast in the present day of active and sometimes presumptuous speculation, can have no greater blessing to ask, than that which is pledged to them in this promise of the Lord; it is not rest from persecution that they need, nor emancipation from spiritual despotism, nor freedom of thought or of worship,—these are necessities of bygone times, we may thank God that they have no place in this country now; the burden which men are now most likely to feel is the burden of doubt; their weariness that which arises from the manner, in which the answer to the question, What is Truth? seems to elude their grasp; the rest which they need is rest from religious perplexities and difficulties, so that they may be able to take Christ's yoke upon them and serve God without distraction: and their comfort must be this, that Christ who promised us rest, and who died that He might be able to fulfil His promise, knows no change of purpose, but is *the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.*

Heb. xiii.
8.

LECTURE II.

THE ATONEMENT.

Preached on Good Friday.

S. JOHN III. 16, 17.

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved.

THE Nicene Creed teaches us to profess our faith in Jesus Christ, “by Whom all things were made, Who for us men and for our salvation came down from Heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man, and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.” The mysterious humiliation of Him, who being very God became very Man and died a human death, is thus asserted, not merely as a fact, but as a fact which was emphatically *for us*,—“for us men, and for our salvation:” and indeed no one can read the history of the life and death of Jesus Christ, as we find it in the Gospels, without observing that self-denial and labour on behalf of His brethren, and sympathy with all their sorrows, were so thoroughly characteristic of the whole, that it would be

LECT.
II.

The Nicene
Creed
teaches
that Christ
suffered *for*
us.

LECT.
II.

impossible to doubt the truth, that all, which He suffered and did, was *in some sense* suffered and done "for us."

Difficulty
of defining
in what
sense *for*
us.

But if we wish to declare *in what sense* the sufferings and deeds of Christ were "for us," we find ourselves at once upon difficult ground. The difficulty may be said to be gathered up and embodied in what is called the doctrine of the Atonement,—a term, which, although not used (so far as I am

See Note 6. aware) in any of the formularies of the Church of England, and only once in the authorized Version of the New Testament, may yet be conveniently adopted as expressing in one word that full doctrine of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, which the Nicene Creed appears to declare, and which also has often been denied, not merely by professed unbelievers, but by those who have taken their stand upon Scripture, and called themselves by the name of Christ. I could have wished upon a day like this, when the sufferings of Christ are brought so vividly before us, and when it seems to be almost a profanation of His sacred passion to enter into controversy concerning its healing virtues, that we should have been content to profess that the sufferings were "for us men and for our salvation," and then to adore in humble gratitude Him who condescended to suffer. Nor should I have thought it necessary to discuss such a doctrine as that of the Atonement, if the difficulties belonging to it were merely those which belong to the Unitarian view of our Lord; but it appears to me that in reference to those newer forms of semi-Christianity, which are now so prevalent, and which all rest upon a basis of Rationalism, this is just one of

those doctrines, upon the maintenance of which in its integrity the safety of the Catholic faith chiefly depends. Moreover, it is precisely one of those doctrines, which, though essentially mysterious and indeed to human powers incomprehensible, do nevertheless shine brightly in the light of Heaven, when regarded from that elevated point of view, at which we propose to station ourselves in the survey of Christian doctrines and difficulties, which is to form the subject of these Lectures. I purpose therefore, upon the assumption of the truth of the Catholic doctrine concerning the being of our Lord Jesus Christ, to examine what light we can find shining upon the doctrine of the Atonement.

LECT.
II.

Now I advisedly abstain from endeavouring to define at present the meaning of the Atonement more exactly than it is defined in the Creed, which tells us that Christ suffered "for us men and for our salvation." But the doctrine, whatever it be, must be contained in the New Testament; and we can adopt no better method of ascertaining what Christ has done, than that of observing the manner, in which He speaks of His own work, or in which the Apostles describe it. In making such observations it is however necessary to bear in mind, that the persons to whom the Christian doctrines were delivered, both during the life of our Lord and in Apostolic times, were for the most part persons of a peculiar religious education, that is, they were Jews. I do not refer to this, with the intention of weakening the force of any Scripture argument, by saying that it has reference to Jewish prejudices; but I do think, that in order

Meaning
of the
Atonement
not
here de-
fined.

The Christ-
ian doc-
trine was
chiefly ad-
dressed to
Jews, to
whom the
notion of
an atone-
ment was
familiar.

LECT.
II.

Exod. xxx.
10.
Levit. xvi.
Heb. ix. 7.

to attain to an intelligent apprehension of the meaning of the New Testament Scriptures, it is necessary to remember that we ourselves are not Jews, and therefore can hardly see all things in the same light as they did to whom those things were originally addressed. For you will bear in mind, that the whole religious education of the Jew was based upon sacrifice; if a Christian teacher spoke to a Jew of a sacrifice for sin, there would be no need that he should explain what he meant; the Jew's mind would at once turn to the ordinances of the Law, and especially to the great atonement for sin; all his thoughts of the meaning and reality of sin, the existence of which in himself and in the world he could not but acknowledge, and the issues of which he could not but dread, would be connected with that institution which he had ever been taught to regard as divine. The greater number of those who were brought up in the practice of the Law, and who continued in it blameless, would perhaps hardly trouble themselves with the question, how or why the blood of bulls and goats could take away their sins; but that they in truth did so, no devout Jew would for a moment doubt. Yet it may be remarked, that the careful manner, in which the taking away of sin was ever connected with the death of a victim, and that victim not taken at random from the flock but chosen so as to be free from all spot and blemish, would suggest to all but the most thoughtless, that there was a mystery in the ordinance of sacrifice, the full solution of which was not to be found in the books of Moses. But certainly, whether a Jew had philosophized upon his religion or not, he could not have

been conversant with the practice of it, without being able at once to put a meaning upon such words as those which John the Baptist used of our Lord, when he said, *Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world.* No difficult question concerning the meaning and possibility of an atonement would rise up in the mind of a Jew, who heard these words; whether he accepted Christ as the Saviour or not, it would at least be an easy thing for him, who had hitherto believed in the atonement for sin made by the sacrifice of a lamb, to recognize the substance, of which his previous faith had been the shadow, in the death of Jesus Christ.

And this view of the matter is that, which is worked out with such singular completeness and power in the Epistle to the Hebrews. That Epistle, addressed as it is to Jews and Jews only, has this for its purpose, namely, to shew how a Jew, without in any true sense of the word apostatizing from the faith of his fathers, but contrariwise taking his stand upon this very ground that God had indeed spoken to them in times past, and recognizing the validity and meaning of the ordinances in which he had been brought up, might yet consistently hold the faith of Christ, and see in His life and death the consummation of the older dispensation. It is unnecessary to do more than refer in passing to the argument of this Epistle; what I wish to enforce is, that the tone of thought and education, which is there assumed, and upon which the writer of the Epistle desires to find a firm foundation for the more perfect doctrine of the sacrifice of Christ, is to be borne in mind as

LECT.
II.

John i. 29.

The relation of the Christian atonement to the Jewish, explained in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

LECT.
II.

belonging generally to those, to whom the Scriptures of the New Testament were chiefly written. And my reason for laying stress upon the point is this, that in consideration of the character of the recipients of those Scriptures, we are not to expect any careful definition of the Atonement effected by the death of our Lord; in writings addressed to those, whose religious system was entirely based upon a doctrine of atonement, the point to be shewn was, not that *an* atonement for sin was necessary, but that the Atonement itself, of which intelligent Jews must see that the blood of lambs and he-goats could only be a type and a shadow, was to be found in its full substance and reality in the Cross of Jesus Christ.

Heb. x. 4.

Sacrifice
and atone-
ment not
newly in-
stituted by
Moses.

It will be well also to remark in this connexion, that the doctrine of atonement or sacrifice for sin would have all the firmer hold upon the mind of a Jew, from the fact that Moses did not pretend to have given a new institution when he prescribed the various offerings of the law. A Jew, conversant with the contents of the sacred books, would know that from the beginning there had been a religious mystery in the sacrifice of slain beasts; and the fact that there *was* a mystery, the fact that it might be hard to trace an organic connexion between the sacrifice and its results, to say, for instance, why Abel's sacrifice was acceptable and Cain's the contrary, so far from darkening the subject when looked upon in relation to the teaching of the Apostles, would be the very thing which would seem to render luminous their doctrine of the perfect sacrifice: if the death of Christ were indeed a sacrifice for sins, then certainly those

See Note 7.

sacrifices might well be supposed to be of the sweetest savour, which were the most striking pre-
ludes of the true one. LECT.
II.

Nor is it right to omit allusion to this other fact, which has been often noticed before, namely, that by some means (it matters not what) sacrifice was, before the time of our Lord, a very general ordinance of the Gentile world. These sacrifices might possibly involve very low views of the being and character of God; they might, perhaps, sometimes contemplate Him as a cruel demon, whose wrath must be appeased by horrid rites; I am not at all desiring to insinuate the notion of a near parallel between Gentile and Jewish sacrifices; the Jewish might be, as no doubt they were, protests against the corrupt views involved in the Gentile; and so, when the Israelites entered Canaan, they were not more carefully enjoined to sacrifice to Jehovah, than they were cautioned *not* to join in the sacrifices of the people of the land; but, taking all this into account, we have still the important fact on record, that either in consequence of ancient tradition, or else in virtue of a human instinct, the worship of God was not made by the Gentiles to consist in prayer only, but was based generally upon sacrifice. And, therefore, even in speaking to Gentiles, a preacher of the Gospel would not be using an entirely strange language, when he spoke of the sacrifice of the death of Christ: a thoughtful Gentile, when he heard of that death, especially in connexion with the tale of Christ's pure and holy life, might very well be led to reflect, that perhaps, here, indeed, was revealed at length in the fulness of time that wondrous birth, with

Sacrifice a
general or-
dinance of
the Gentile
world.

LECT.
II.

which the whole creation had hitherto travailed in pain.

Hence the New Testament notion of an atonement for sin not entirely new either to Jew or Gentile.

What I have now been saying has been directed to this point,—to shew, that in the New Testament the Evangelists and Apostles were not introducing a new thought, when they spoke in various forms of Christ making an atonement for sin; they were rather representing Christ to be the substance of which men already had the shadow, and arguing that faith in Him was necessary to give meaning and reality to doctrines, which they already professed to hold. Hence, therefore, we are not to expect to find in the New Testament any careful definition of the manner in which the sacrifice of Christ was a true and perfect sacrifice; nor are we to wonder, if we who approach the doctrines of the Gospel from a very different point of view from that occupied by those, to whom the first preachers addressed themselves, find some little difficulty in giving at once a clear answer to the question,—What do you mean by an Atonement for sin?

What is meant by an atonement for sin?

The question asked by a philosopher, not by a Jew.

Magee on the Atonement, Vol. I. p. 42.

Now, the answer to this question seems to be sometimes obscured by the apparent neglect of the fact, that, if asked at all in these days, it will be asked by a person who is, or assumes to be, a philosopher, and not by a Jew. Thus I find the most well-known writer upon this subject very justly complaining, that sometimes “the nature of sacrifices, as generally practised and understood, antecedent to the time of Christ, has been first examined; and from that, as a ground of explanation, the notion of Christ’s sacrifice has been derived: whereas,” he continues, “in fact, by *this*, all former sacrifices are to be interpreted, and in reference to

it only, can they be understood." And yet this same writer, almost immediately afterwards, speaks of the sacrifice of Christ as being "a true and proper sacrifice," in apparent neglect of the fact that the very point of difficulty is this,—what constitutes "a true and proper sacrifice"? is an atonement morally conceivable? and can a sacrifice for sins be in any sense admitted as the true foundation of the spiritual life? I propose then, in pursuance of the general plan which has been laid down, and (I may add) in entire accordance with the principle enunciated in the passage which has just now been quoted, to contemplate the life and death of our Lord in the light of His divine nature, and see what hints we can gain from such contemplation towards the interpretation of the language of the Creed, that the Incarnation and Sufferings and Death of the Eternal Son were "for us men and for our salvation."

If then we inquire what Christ has done for us, we can obtain at least several answers, such as the following :

What has
Christ done
for us?

(1) In the first place, the very assumption of human nature by the Son of God not only stamps a dignity upon human nature which nothing else could have stamped upon it, and illuminates with a brighter light than had ever shone upon it before the great charter of humanity, that *God created man in His own image*, but also it implies a stooping to our infirmities, and a condescending sympathy with our condition, which could, perhaps, have been by no other means made intelligible to us. If we are to be permitted in Theology to use words in anything like the meaning which they

First
answer.

Gen. i. 27.

LECT.
II.

bear in common life, I do not know how we can describe this act on the part of the Son of God by any better name than that of *self-sacrifice*; I am not saying how such an act is conceivable, I am professedly grounding my views upon the mysterious revelation that in the person of Jesus Christ God *did* become man; and I say that this very fact may be rightly described as a sacrifice of the Eternal Son for the sake of men. For if it had done no more than this, namely, assured us of the love of God, and given us ground for hoping and believing great things concerning a race so entirely differenced from all other living creatures,—if it had only given the fullest sanction to the truth which philosophers have recognized, namely, that the appearance of man upon the globe is a phenomenon of an altogether different order from that of the previous creations,—the Incarnation might well be regarded as a sacrifice of Himself, for the love of men, on the part of the Eternal Son.

Second
answer.

(2) But again: we can hardly be at a loss for at least a partial answer to the question, What has Christ done for us? when we look at the effect produced by His coming upon the condition of the world. If we say that Christ has thrown a new life into the world, and, in the highest sense of the word, civilized it, and persuaded men to act upon principles which their conscience approves, but which other influences frequently lead them to neglect, we assert nothing (I apprehend) which is not admitted even by the greater number of those, who, nevertheless, object to the representation of Christ given in the Gospels, and embodied in the creeds and ordinances of the Church. For this, be

it observed, is characteristic of the unbelief of the present day, that it is not in general a scoffing at religion, but rather a professed attempt to free Christianity from errors, and to substitute a kind of spiritualism in the place of historical faith; and however divergent may be the views expressed by writers from the orthodox faith, yet almost all boast themselves in this, that they are at least touching the hem of Christ's garment. I say then, that in attributing to the coming of Christ a very remarkable regeneration of humanity, we are only doing that to which most thoughtful persons will assent. And if the almost utter impotence of those, who had themselves arrived at some knowledge of God, to make their knowledge diffusive and influential,—if the moral confusion of the Heathen world, which no one will venture to palliate or deny, had been causes sufficient to induce the Son of God to become the Son of Man, and to assume a garb in which teaching with human voice He could *teach with authority*, and give such lessons and examples of unselfishness and purity, and brotherly love, as should be a seed of regeneration in the world ever afterwards,—would it not be right to say, that in this sense also, Christ had come into the world to put away sin, and bring in everlasting righteousness, by the sacrifice of Himself?

LECT.
II.S. Mark i.
22.

(3) But once more: did not the coming of our Lord into the world enable Him to assure us of truths very important for us to know, of which, nevertheless, we had no other means of certain knowledge? Take for an instance the great question, whether the present life constitutes the whole

Third
answer.

LECT.
II.

of man's being: how are we to obtain a reliable answer? that the instinct of man points to a higher and better life is, I suppose, undeniable; that there has consequently been a very general guess at the true solution of the question is perhaps not to be wondered at, and we all know that some of the greatest and best of philosophers have devoted their powers to an attempt to demonstrate the truth: but I think also we all feel, that a demonstration of the whole truth is not possible, or at all events has not yet been given, and that perhaps the utmost we can do is to shew, that no valid reason can be alleged for asserting the destruction of a human body to be of necessity the destruction of human life; and it is to be remarked, that in our own times, some of those who have given up belief in Christ in the Catholic sense of the phrase, have also been led to profess a total scepticism concerning the life to come, not by any means denying it, but alleging that there are not sufficient data upon which to ground a rational opinion. Now I suppose that to a Christian the real ground upon which he practically believes "in the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting," is this, that Christ has told us that these things are true: *life and immortality have been brought to light by the Gospel**: and a Christian may very well say, that although he cannot dogmatize as to how these things shall be, yet he cannot doubt concerning truths which were uttered by the human lips of Him, who became Man that He might be *the Light of men*. And hence, if to the question, What

See Note 8.

2 Tim. i.
10.

S. John i.
4, 9.

* See Archbishop Whately's essay on the "Revelation of a Future State," in his *Peculiarities of the Christian Religion*.

has Christ done? we had this as the chief point of our answer, that He has given us a certainty of truths which we could not otherwise know, and has made that a matter of faith which could otherwise be only one of speculation, and upon which, nevertheless, the exalted character of men very much depends, and that He has emptied Himself of His glory and humbled Himself for the purpose of declaring these truths in the only way in which we can conceive them by possibility to have been declared,—then should we not have good reason to speak of Christ, as having made a sacrifice of Himself for the sake of us men?

Now these and the like answers, which may be made concerning the results of the Incarnation, deal with it as leading to consequences and conferring benefits upon mankind, according to principles which we can estimate and understand. Are we therefore to say, this is a rational account of the matter, and with this we will be content? This is by no means the conclusion to which I am desiring to conduct the argument; I rather wish to put in the strongest light possible this great truth, that however important and comprehensive such benefits as those already described may appear to be, they by no means exhaust the Scripture account of the Incarnation; but having recognized these benefits, I proceed to ask, is it unreasonable to suppose, that if the Catholic doctrine of the Incarnation be true, there will be in addition to these consequences, which I may call in a certain sense *natural*, other *transcendental* consequences,—consequences, I mean, which do really result according to a divine law of causation, and which yet cannot be

LECT.
II.

These answers imply *natural* consequences of the Incarnation.

There may be *transcendental* as well.

LECT.
II.

connected with their origin by any process of human logic? Of course the nature of the case precludes us from predicating the necessity of such consequences; but when I find such asserted or hinted at in Scripture, is there anything to shock my reason? Need Christ on this account become a stumblingblock, or His cross foolishness? Or rather, is it not hard to believe in the possibility of so stupendous a fact, as that of the incarnation of the Son of God, without also expecting that results would flow from it, such as human philosophy could never have guessed the right way of accomplishing, and such as human reason can never measure? When therefore we find in Scripture such phrases as these,—that Christ *gave Himself a ransom for all*; that *He suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God*; that *we are bought with a price*; that *He redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us*; that *He is our advocate, our propitiation, our intercessor*; that *He was made perfect through sufferings, and so became the author of salvation*; that *God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them*;—when we read such phrases as these, phrases which (with many others like them) seem all to point in one direction, and by their very variety and multiplicity forbid us to explain them away,—why should we say sceptically, *How can these things be?* why not deem it the more reasonable course, to recognize in the alleged results of the Incarnation, and Sufferings, and Death of Christ, something at least corresponding in moral magnitude with the magnitude of the operating cause? And here, as I

See Note 9.

See Note
10.

1 Tim. ii. 6.

1 Pet. iii.

18.

1 Cor. vi.

20.

Gal. iii. 13.

1 John ii.

1, 2.

Heb. vii.

25.

Heb. ii. 10;

v. 9.

2 Cor. v.

19.

S. John iii.

9.

apprehend, we come upon the doctrine of the Atonement, properly so called; that is, we are led to the recognition of the truth, that the spiritual condition of the race of man has been changed, as the result of the Incarnation of the Son of God. Persons may of course easily misrepresent this doctrine, and say that it is derogatory to the character of the Almighty, that He should require a human sacrifice to appease His wrath; that *God is love* ^{I John iv. 8.} and cannot be propitiated by the sufferings of the innocent; and that it is impossible for a man of honourable feeling to wish for a boon so obtained;—but *who* preaches such doctrines as those which are thus reprobated? *who* does not maintain the doctrine of the text, as the only ground of that of the Atonement, namely, that *God so loved the world*, that He even stooped *Himself* to save it? And before we venture upon any decided opinion as to what might or might not be necessary to reconcile man with God, would it not be well, that we should first ascertain whether we can measure the meaning of moral evil, and satisfy ourselves how it could come to pass, that the handiwork of a holy God could ever become so unholy and impure as this earth undeniably has become? For indeed the evil condition of the world, and the atonement for human sin, are only mystery for mystery; and may it not be found more difficult to believe, that God should have suffered His creation to be defiled, than that He should have done all, that the Creed alleges Him to have done, for the purpose of repairing the evil?

I readily admit, that statements concerning the redemptive work of our Lord may have obtained ^{The doctrine of the Atonement.}

LECT.
II.

ment per-
haps mis-
represent-
ed in
popular
theology.

See Note
12.

Ps. lxii.

12.

Rom. xiv.

12.

See each of
the three
Creeds.

currency in popular theology, which have no foundation in Scripture, or at least in Scripture rightly interpreted. I think it not at all impossible, that the doctrine of the Atonement may frequently have been stated in a manner justly liable to exception; and I would willingly believe, that much which has been supposed to be alleged against the doctrine has been in fact alleged against unauthorized representations of the same. When for instance we hear of the sufferings of Christ being vicarious, in the sense of Christ having literally undergone pains which should have been inflicted upon ourselves, and of the righteousness of Christ being reckoned to us, so that we being in reality sinful are counted righteous in virtue of Christ's righteousness imputed to us, and the like, it seems to me, that we get ourselves involved in a maze of notions, which, though possibly the vehicles of truth to some devout minds, are incapable of being substantiated as doctrines, and are, if taken in the strict sense of the terms, for the most part untrue. And I do not wonder, that the mind of a man should shrink from the thought of exchanging the principle of being judged according to his works,—a principle clearly announced in the Scriptures both Old and New, and ever held sacred by the Christian Church,—for the notion of being saved from the consequences of his deeds, by a kind of legal process, I had almost said a legal fiction, which upsets his notions of right and wrong. But holding sacred, as we are bound to do, the great truth of human responsibility, *who* will undertake to say, what may have been the moral effect produced, not upon a few persons only, but upon the entire race of

1 John ii. 2.

man,—upon their prospects as sinners,—upon the possibility of their being called to be saints,—by the assumption of human nature on the part of the Eternal Son? If the sin of one man could pollute a whole race, which not Scripture alone but every day's experience at least proves to be possible, who shall say what might not be the effect of the perfect obedience of Him, who in unspeakable self-abnegation and humility came to do the will of God? And when we find so remarkable a doctrine as the redemption of the race, the possibility of the pardon of sin, the title to eternal life, ever connected in the most consistent manner with the no less remarkable doctrine of the coming of the Son of God into the world in the likeness of sinful flesh, are we not in danger of being guilty of that "infinitely absurd assumption," (of which Bishop Butler warns us,) that we know the whole of the case, if we undertake to say, that the doctrine of an atonement for sin is one which cannot be believed?

LECT.
II.

Rom. v. 19.

Heb. x. 5,
6, 7.Analogy,
Part II,
chap. v.

And if there be a feeling in the mind of any one,—and it is possible that the feeling may lurk in the minds of some, who would not venture to oppugn the doctrine in set terms,—a feeling, that the doctrine after all is dry and unpractical, a dogma for the schools rather than a living truth for living Christian men, I would remind such a person, that the doctrine ever appears in Scripture as the very spring of Christian life. That principle of conduct, which S. Paul enunciated, when he said *The love of Christ constraineth us*, was no other than the practical form of the doctrine of the atonement for sins: S. Paul contemplated the cross of Christ, as we may contemplate it this day, not

The practical form of the doctrine of the Atonement.

2 Cor. v.
14.

LECT. II. as the support of any school-dogma, but as the
 — affecting symbol of a great work undertaken for
 S. John x. mankind by Him, who of His own accord died
 18. upon it ; he might not fasten any mere thesis for
 subtle disputation to that wood, upon which the
 Col. ii. 14. sins of the world were nailed ; he knew that him-
 self and all the race of mankind had been by that
 cross redeemed, and therefore he felt that he was
 no longer his own, but bound by the doctrine of
 1 Cor. vi. the cross to do the will of his Redeemer without
 20. reserve.

Con-
 clusion.

Here then I close that, which must be at best
 a most imperfect essay towards the description and
 vindication of this great doctrine. It has been no
 part of my design to enter into details concerning
 the Mediatorial character of Christ ; neither have
 I dwelt upon that work, which He even now per-
 1 John ii. 1. forms for us, as our Advocate with the Father ;
 nor again have I discussed that phase of the
 doctrine, which is brought before us by such words
 S. John vi. as those of our Lord,—*Whoso eateth my flesh and*
 54, 55. *drinketh my blood, hath eternal life ; and I will*
raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat
indeed, and my blood is drink indeed,—and which
 is brought before our minds also by the words of
 the Liturgy, “The body of Jesus Christ, which was
 given for thee,” and “the blood of Jesus Christ,
 which was shed for thee,” “preserve thy body and
 soul unto everlasting life :” my chief aim has been
 rather to exhibit *this* point in a clear light, that if
 any one can take his stand upon the Catholic
 doctrine of the being of Jesus Christ, and upon
 that ground endeavour to estimate the mysterious

and awful character of the event of this day, it will be no difficult thing for him to accept the doctrine, that what was then done was in the most true and wonderful and efficient sense “for us men and for our salvation.” Men may have darkened this doctrine by mixing it with human speculations, or by endeavouring to measure the infinite by human measures, but I feel confident that the doctrine itself involves nothing of which a philosopher need be ashamed; and perhaps the highest point of philosophy has then been reached, when a man has learnt to say, with full understanding of the meaning of his words, *God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Gal. vi. 14.

May that blessed Spirit, whose office it is to take of the things of Christ and shew them to men, teach us all to estimate aright the work which has been wrought “for us men and for our salvation;” and if in any way the truth has been by me misstated or obscured, may He, who hung upon the cross this day, and the glory of whose sacrifice I would fain have made to appear,—may He pardon what has been done amiss. S. John xvi. 14, 15.

LECTURE III.

THE RESURRECTION.

Preached on Easter Day.

ACTS XXVI. 8.

*Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you,
that God should raise the dead?*

LECT.
III.

Peculiarity
of the Re-
surrection
as a fact of
Christian
history.

IT would seem impossible upon this most solemn Feast of the Christian year to choose any subject of discourse in an assembly of Christians, except that which the day itself suggests, namely, the Resurrection of our blessed Lord from the dead. For the Resurrection, perhaps, more than any other event in the history of Christ, is bound up with the hopes of His disciples, and with the character of His Church. The Birth, for instance, would be admitted to be one of the most blessed events which the world has witnessed, by many who would be unwilling to subscribe to the Catholic faith, but who would willingly admit the primacy of the human race to belong to Jesus Christ. The Crucifixion also leaves no room for doubt upon historical grounds, and may well be recognised as a fact of immeasurable moral value by those, who yet may be unable to apprehend the full meaning and mystery of the Lord's sufferings and death. But the Resurrection is a fact of another class; it is

an alleged preternatural occurrence, upon the truth of which the character of the Apostles is staked, and upon which as a foundation the Church of Christ stands : it is impossible either for friend or foe to separate the Christian faith from the truth of Christ having risen again : the Resurrection is either a cardinal fact in the history of the human race, or else it is a deplorable example of imposture, the more deplorable on account of its very general success.

And be it observed, that the Resurrection stands distinguished from all other recorded Christian miracles in this, namely, that the Christian faith is bound up with it in a manner in which it is bound up with no other individual miracle. No doubt the Christian faith has in general a miraculous basis, its truth is inseparably connected with the belief in miracles ; but of all those recorded in the Gospels there is not one, with which the faith can be said to stand or fall, except that of the Resurrection of our Lord. For if we take any individual miracle, reported by one or more of the Evangelists, it may be open to criticism in several ways, and even its historical value may be shaken, without essentially damaging the fabric of which it professes to form a part. Thus, for example, it is always a fair question concerning any individual passage in one of the Gospels, as in the case of any other book, whether it be a genuine portion of the work as the Evangelist wrote it ; and, therefore, the genuineness of any particular miraculous history might fairly be open to critical discussion. Or, again, some persons, without any feeling of hostility to the faith, might think it justifiable to consider,

Distinction
between
the Resur-
rection and
other
miracles.
See Note
13.

LECT.
III.

whether in any particular case the internal evidence justified us in understanding the Lord's conduct in precisely that manner in which the Gospels have represented it, whether it be quite clear that in every case, in which the disciples imagined that they perceived the miraculous power of our Lord, there really was a miracle. I am not saying whether this mode of treating the writings of the Evangelists is right or wrong, but only that admitting for argument's sake its propriety, and even supposing that it should be proved by modern criticism that some one or more particular miracles, alleged to have occurred in our Lord's history, must be struck out of the catalogue, still the Christian faith stands essentially where it did before. But this cannot be affirmed concerning the Resurrection. For this we know to have been the very basis of the preaching of the Apostles; this was the very truth, of which they believed themselves to be the appointed witnesses; when the place of Judas was to be filled up, this was regarded as one main qualification for his successor, that he should be able to bear witness concerning the Resurrection. And hence, in all ages, he who preaches Christ must preach Him not only as crucified, but as risen again; and he whose office it is to speak concerning Christian evidences must ever be driven upon the question, Is it a thing incredible that God should raise the dead?

Acts i. 22.

1 Cor. xv.
11.

The Resur-
rection
may pro-
perly be
treated by
itself.

It had been my intention to make the miracles of our Lord one of the earliest applications of the method of viewing Christian doctrines and difficulties, which has been chosen for the subject of this course of Sermons. But the preceding remarks

will perhaps be sufficient to shew, that in confining our attention to-day, as the greatness of the Easter Feast would seem to require, to the particular question of the Resurrection of our Lord, I am, in fact, treating of a miracle, which may fairly be separated from the rest. If an opponent of the faith can shew, either that the testimony for the Resurrection is false, or that the event is in itself incredible, he need not trouble himself to do more.

And here let me remark by the way, the contrast between the subject brought before us to-day and that which we considered on Good Friday. In the case of the Crucifixion the historical fact is at once admitted; no one will venture to assert that Jesus of Nazareth, whom the Apostles preached, was not crucified under Pontius Pilate; the difficulty begins when we desire to put an interpretation upon that death, and when we declare that it was not merely the death of a righteous man cruelly delivered up by the jealousy of Jewish priests, but a death totally different in its character and its consequences from all others which the world has seen. On the other hand, in the case of the Resurrection it is the historical fact that will be questioned; while the beauty of the doctrine, of which it may be taken as the symbol, when regarded as a mythical representation of the resurrection of humanity, or the like, will be gladly recognised by those, who would not for a moment entertain the thought of its objective historical reality. Whereas, therefore, on Good Friday we had to consider the truth and meaning of a doctrine, this day we are concerned entirely with the credibility of an historical fact.

LECT.
III.

Contrast
between
the event
of Easter
Day and
that of
Good
Friday.

LECT.
III.

A few re-
marks
upon the
evidence
of the Re-
surrection.

Now it is my principal purpose, not to attempt a complete summary of the evidence upon which the truth of the Resurrection depends, but rather to shew the light in which the evidence ought to be regarded, in order that it may be capable of producing conviction. Nevertheless it will conduce to clearness and completeness, if a few words be first devoted to the question of the evidence itself.

First
Remark.

The first thing to be remarked is, that however extraordinary the tale of the Resurrection may be, there can be no doubt of the fact of its having been constantly affirmed by those, who had the best means of knowing the truth. It is not that the fact is incidentally noticed in one or two Christian writings of an early date, but that it is noticed or implied, or taken for granted, in almost every Christian document which we possess. Sometimes it is referred to historically, sometimes as a sign of Christ's Majesty, sometimes as a ground of exhortation; and even when no express reference is made to the fact, still the whole circle of early Christian literature ever speaks of Christ not as a man who was once crucified and there an end, but as one who having been crucified is alive and employed actively in the care of His Church upon earth. In fact, it is palpable, that all the utterances of the early Christians, whether by speech or by letter, assume this as an underlying fact, without which they are by no means intelligible, that Jesus Christ was not dead. This extraordinary consent in the assertion of so remarkable a story, and not merely consent in the assertion, but consent in building up a society in the face of a most determined opposition upon the assertion, may be re-

Acts i. 3.
Rom. xiv.
9, 10.
Heb. vii.
25.

Acts xxv.
19.

garded as putting the fact upon as strong an historical basis as it is possible to conceive: so that it may be confidently asked, whether there be any fact in history, in favour of which a greater amount of testimony can be secured.

LECT.
III.

Is there equal evidence for any other fact?

Of course it may be said, that the whole story is an imposture. This used to be said, but I think that the time for the charge has gone by. In fact, taking the charge in its more palpable and gross form, as it was urged in the school of English Deism, we might almost be content to leave the refutation to the conscience of any man, who would undertake to read the New Testament with care. Any one, who will take the trouble to make himself familiar with the character of the Apostles, will say, that they were not the men willingly to invent a lie, nor the men to propagate it cunningly even if they had invented it. The charge of their being enthusiasts is, I apprehend, the charge of imposture in a more gentle form, and may be deemed to be refuted by the same kind of internal evidence. The rationalistic view, which supposes the Lord not to have actually died upon the cross, may now be treated as a thing of the past. And the mythical theory would seem to attribute to the simplicity of the early Christians an abstract apprehension of the genius of Christianity, totally diverse from anything of which we find a record in the earliest Christian writings. In fact, the various attempts to explain away the preternatural character of the story, upon which the New Testament is founded, can scarcely be regarded as views naturally arising from the history itself, or from the quality of its evidence, but rather as efforts to get rid of the

Second Remark.
Is the story an imposture?

LECT.
III.

record of facts, which upon other grounds it is deemed necessary to expunge from the pages of authentic history.

Third
Remark.
See Note
14.

There is one point, which has been noticed by those who have discussed the historical character of the story of our Lord's Resurrection, and which may perhaps with advantage be referred to in passing, because it is one of those the value of which it is easy to recognise and appreciate, and for which it is scarcely possible to give a reasonable account upon any supposition except that of the truth of the story. This point depends upon a comparison of the temper of mind, evinced by the Apostles at the time of their Master's death, with that exhibited by them afterwards. The Evangelists tell us, that at the time of the apprehension and execution of the Lord, His chosen followers were utterly cast down and broken-spirited, as well they might be; *they all forsook Him and fled*; they had trusted that He would have redeemed Israel, but they gave up their hopes when they saw Him actually hang upon the cross; there can be hardly any ground for doubting all this, even with the most sceptical; it is so entirely in accordance with all that might have been expected, that we believe it at once. Now let us pass over a few weeks or months, and look at the same disciples again. Not only is their mourning over, but it is changed to a joy which they never had before. It is not that they have grieved a decent time, as people do for deceased friends, and have now returned to society again; but they are palpably different men, their whole tone of mind changed; they glory in that very cross, which struck dismay

S. Matt.
xxvi. 56.
S. Luke
xxiv. 21.

into their minds ; they are penetrated with the conviction, that they have a Gospel to preach concerning Jesus Christ, and that very cross of shame, which it concerns all men to know. Now it seems absolutely necessary to suppose, in order to make these two parts of the history hang together,—neither part (be it observed) involving anything preternatural, or affording a point upon which a sceptic can very well fix a doubt,—to suppose, that there is some mysterious event in the middle. Whatever notion a person may have formed of the character of the sacred writings, still viewing them merely as documents, which certainly cannot be dismissed by the boldest critic as altogether spurious, it is manifest that there must have been something very remarkable intervening between the unquestioned fact of Christ's death upon the cross, and the no less unquestioned fact of the preaching of the Gospel by His disciples. What could it be? The Evangelists tell us, that it was the reappearance of Him who was crucified ; such an event at least renders the whole story consistent ; if that be declared incredible, what other shall we put in its place ?

The truth is, that as a matter of mere evidence there is probably no fact in history, which can be put upon surer ground than that of the Resurrection of our Lord from the dead ; but it is equally the truth, that it is not a defect of historical evidence, which is likely to render it doubtful in the mind of any one who studies the Gospels. The ground of modern infidelity has been, not so much the insufficiency of historical evidence, as the supposed intrinsic incredibility of alleged events of

The Resurrection rejected (if at all) on the ground not of insufficient evidence, but of essential incredibility.

LECT.
III.

a certain class; what are called miracles are supposed to be incredible in their very essence; Hume gave currency to the principle in this country, and has been followed abundantly in others; and the Resurrection of our Lord, coming under this general character, would be placed at once in the class of *incredibilia*. The question, how are the phenomena presented by the Christian documents to be disposed of, becomes from this point of view a secondary consideration; it may be upon the ground of imposture, or of enthusiasm, or of misapprehension, or of the poetical accretions to the story in after-times, but the phenomena *must* be disposed of in some way, because the event with which they are connected is in the nature of things incredible.

Is the Resurrection incredible?

As a matter of fact it is believed,

We come then to the question, *Is the Resurrection of our Lord a thing incredible?* Manifestly in one sense at least it is *not*; because we find it to be matter of fact, not only that the Apostles and early martyrs were willing to lay down their lives in testimony of their belief of it, but that hundreds and thousands of persons *do* believe it in the present day: and not only believe it, in the sense of repeating it as an article of a Creed, which their mothers or the priests have put in their mouths, but regard it as emphatically *the* thing which they *do* believe, the fact upon which they live, and in the faith of which they hope to die. And if it be said, that this assertion holds only of poor ignorant folks, or of those who are not in the habit of analyzing their thoughts and distinguishing between what they really believe and what they fancy they believe, it is to be replied, that the assertion cannot be confined to such persons; for it

is certainly the fact, that a multitude of men well educated and well informed, every way calculated to estimate aright the difficulties belonging to such an article of faith, are of the number of those, who do receive the resurrection of the Lord as a simple reality. And not only so; for the number of believers includes many of the most penetrating and profound minds, bred under those very conditions, which are supposed to render impossible faith in things transcending ordinary human experience. Thus, if I may venture to single out from those belonging to our own country one of the most remarkable intellects of recent times, I would call to mind, that Coleridge in the maturity of his thoughts found in the Christian faith, not that which the onward progress of modern thought must of necessity obliterate, or at least transform so as to be something quite different from what it was, but (as he himself testifies) "the perfection of human intelligence." And even with regard to the German schools of divines, upon which many of us are accustomed to look with so much jealousy, it is to be observed, that if there be writers of eminence who profess to deem such a fact as the Resurrection incredible, names of other eminent writers,—names quite as weighty, to say the least,—may be mentioned, as those of men, who, with precisely the same data before them, have arrived at the precisely opposite conclusion.

not by the simple and ignorant only, but by the most profound thinkers.

Preface to *Aids to Reflection*.

See Note 15.

It may possibly appear strange, that in a question, such as that now under consideration, I should venture to introduce a reference to the authority of human names; but it seems to me, that the peculiar circumstances of the case render such a

Apology for reference to human names.

LECT.
III.

proceeding not only pardonable, but desirable. Of course, in a question of demonstration, the quotation of names, either for or against a proposition, is futile: but when the ground taken is virtually this, not that the truth of a fact has not been demonstrated, but that the fact itself is of a kind which cannot be demonstrated,—which can by no testimony be substantiated,—then it is of great importance to remark, that men of very acute intellect, minds undeniably of the very first class, have, in reality, thought otherwise. It is not argued that we are right in our judgment upon a certain point, because we can quote the names of a certain number of illustrious men who have believed the same; but unquestionably it is something like a guarantee, that we are not deceiving ourselves in believing a thing which is altogether incapable of being true, when we find that we have on our side, as fellow-believers with ourselves, men quite as considerable as those, who would endeavour to override our convictions by the alleged results of modern science, and the necessities of the modern tone of thought. For, indeed, it can scarcely fail to make a student of divine truth, who is modestly conscious of his own infirmities and diffident of his own powers, somewhat anxious concerning the scientific ground upon which he stands, when he observes the manner, in which men of unquestioned ability either assert or take for granted that such ground is untenable: and the anxiety may be allayed by observing, that there is in the hitherto recorded convictions of mankind no such *consensus* against the facts of the Christian faith as to justify any man in the assertion, that they are in them-

selves incredible. A man may possibly have a right to say that he does not believe them himself, and that is a matter between him and God : but no man has a right to say, that they are in themselves incredible, so long as in matter of fact they are believed by some of the acutest intellects that God has made.

LECT.
III.

The truth seems to be, that a fact is credible,—that is, subjectively credible,—or not, chiefly according to the ground from which it is contemplated. If we regard the race of mankind as merely one of many, the highest amongst living races, but only the highest, distinct from the lower animals in degree, but not essentially different in kind, then undoubtedly the alleged resuscitation of one or more of the race from death would appear to be a circumstance well nigh incredible. But suppose the race of mankind to be one totally distinct from all others,—one which it implies the utmost confusion of thought to judge by rules applicable to the mere physical developments of animal life,—one, the idea of whose constitution is essentially not physical, but moral and spiritual,—and then what right have we to apply to such a race conclusions founded upon the merely physical phenomena of the lives and deaths of brutes? Even without any distinct revelation from Heaven, is there not an instinct of the human mind, which rebels against the thought of ordinary material rules being made applicable to the destinies of those, with whom matter is but the case and tenement of something much nobler and better?

The credibility of a fact depends very much upon the ground from which it is regarded.

And if the various indications of nobility belonging to our race be but the hints of the great

The Resurrection not incredible,

LECT.
III.

when contemplated from the ground of the Incarnation of the Eternal Son.

truth which underlies the whole Scripture Revelation, namely, that the nature of man has been assumed by God Himself, then have we not an altogether new ground upon which to stand, in judging of what is, or what is not, credible concerning the history of man? Here, then, we come upon the application of our general principle: we suppose it to be granted, that God *has* assumed our nature, that this truth which is morally so conceivable, and so accordant with all the indications of the divine which we distinguish in the history of man, had its actual fulfilment in time by the birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We suppose this to be granted, and we then ask, what shall we venture to predicate as credible or incredible concerning the child who is thus born to us, and whose Name is emphatically, *Wonderful*? Shall we say that the experience of four thousand years, even though it should be allowed to have been broken by no one single exception, by an Enoch for instance, or an Elijah, must necessarily exhibit all the facts and phenomena of such an Incarnation? Shall we venture to apply empirical material laws, without any doubt concerning their perfect generality, to such a case as this? Or shall we not be more philosophical, as well as more religious, if we acquiesce in the conclusion, that it was *impossible* for the body of this *Holy One* to see *corruption*?

Isai. ix. 6.
Acts ii. 31;
xiii. 37.

Error of those who deny the Resurrection.

Looking upon the matter from this point of view, we may perhaps venture to say, that the error of those, who assert it to be a thing incredible that God should raise the dead, consists essentially in this, that they assume the true law of human

existence to be deducible from a certain number of particular cases ; whereas the Incarnation and Death and Resurrection of Christ prove, that the true law is (as we might have hoped) something transcending the mere laws of matter, and that the laws of material decay do not apply in their full force and generality to the human race, in consequence of a higher law stepping in. In fact, whereas an unbeliever would assert, that the general death and decay and corruption of the human body exhibit the normal condition of mankind, the Christian would maintain that that condition is not normal but diseased, that it is the condition of men who through transgression have lost access to the Tree of Life, and that the Resurrection of Christ through God's mercy exhibits the true history of redeemed man.

LECT.
III.

Gen. iii. 24.
Rev. ii. 7 ;
xxii. 2, 14.

I say the true history of *redeemed man* : for this is indeed the distinction of sacred from other history, and the key to many of its mysteries, that it contemplates man from that point of view which is afforded by the fact, that God has taken his nature into union with Himself. And the great question to be considered by any one, who wishes to take a really philosophical view of the Christian faith and to estimate its difficulties aright, is this, whether this great moral fact be credible or no : and if he find nothing incredible here, but rather the exhibition of a truth which all mankind have been feeling after, and to which his own heart's sense of spiritual need urges his assent, then he will hardly be surprised to find, that ordinary material laws deduced from a limited experience do not entirely suffice to express the conditions of

The real
question,
Is Re-
demption
credible ?

LECT.
III.

a life, which is thus seen to be in its essence spiritual. In fact, the question, Is it credible that God should raise the dead? requires for its solution an answer to the preliminary question, What else *do* you deem credible? If you contemplate God as the mere personification of what we call laws of nature, it is difficult to say what it is possible to believe, or, indeed, whether there is anything much worth believing: but if you contemplate God not as a *personification* but as a *person*, as the Father of the human race, who made them in His own image, and loved them so as to send His Son to redeem and His Holy Spirit to sanctify them, then it is equally difficult to say what may not be believed. If the love of God sent His Son into the world, why should it be thought a thing incredible that He should even raise Him from the dead?

Thus the
grounds of
belief are
moral
grounds.

And thus, although the Resurrection of our Lord may be in one sense regarded as a material or physical miracle, being a deviation from the general empirical law of human decay, still the grounds for believing it are essentially moral grounds; and it may therefore rightly form a portion of a Creed, which is intended to be the support not of the wise and prudent only, but of the simple and of very babes. Hence, we find, that the Resurrection of Christ does strike the minds of Christians in general, not as a mere tale of wonder, but as a fact which comes more closely home to themselves than almost any other,—the event which they celebrate, not as magical, but as most joyful and soul-stirring,—Easter-day ever coming round to them as the anniversary of their deliver-

ance from the bondage of corruption, the date of their patent of immortality, the birthday of their spiritual bodies. And the sophism, that it is more probable that testimony should be false than a miracle true, or the still bolder assertion that an event like the Resurrection of the Lord is in itself incredible, do not come near the minds of simple Christians to hurt them, because they do instinctively and practically stand upon that ground, which is the only true ground either for philosopher or for peasant, the Incarnation of God's eternal Son. *He who believes in this Son of God has the witness in himself.*

LECT.
III.

1 John v.
10.

The true foundation of faith then is, as it ought to be, a moral one. The felt necessities of man's spiritual nature forbid him to reject the Gospel of an *Immanuel, God with us*; and having recognised the wonderful being of the Child born into the world to bear this wonderful name, we can scarcely be surprised, if we find in His death, as in His birth, something transcending the ordinary laws of humanity. But while all this is admitted, and while it is also admitted as a consequence, that faith can best be strengthened by practical holiness, by doing God's will, by imitating the example rather than discussing the mysteries of the life of Christ, it is at the same time to be acknowledged that a man is liable to be seduced from his allegiance by intellectual difficulties, and that more in our own perhaps than in any preceding times. So, however, it was even in the days of Christ Himself. Did it ever strike you, in reading the Gospels, that the only instance of many of His disciples *going back and walking no more with Him*, was

The danger
of stum-
bling at in-
tellectual
difficulties

S. Matt. i.
23.

illustrated
by refer-
ence to a
passage in
the life of
Christ.

LECT.
III.S. John vi.
66.S. John vi.
51.

ver. 60.

one, in which the minds of the deserters had been puzzled with that which seemed to them to be incredible doctrine? We read in S. John's Gospel, that at a certain epoch *many of His disciples from that time went back, and walked no more with Him*: and what had happened? had Christ represented His service as unpromising, as demanding much self-sacrifice, much leaving of fathers, and mothers, and homes? He did do this no doubt, but we do not read of any desertion following. Was there a prospect of persecution? Not more than at any other time. Had Christ failed in any promises or pledges given? There is no hint of such a charge against Him. No: but He had spoken on this fashion: *I am the living bread which came down from Heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world*. He had spoken thus, and much more in the same mysterious tone; and many of His disciples said, *This is an hard saying; who can hear it?* This revelation of a mystery, at which the intellect of the disciples, who regarded His words from an unspiritual point of view, was tempted to rebel, caused many of them *to go back and walk no more with Him*. A hard doctrine was able to do that, which the prospect of personal hardship could not do.

The
grounds of
stability il-
lustrated
by the
same.

And if this part of the story represents to us only too truly the case of Christ's disciples in these days, sometimes staggered by an apparently hard doctrine, and on that account going back and walking with Him no more, the remainder of it will perhaps represent as truly the ground of sted-

fastness in the faith. *Jesus said to the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered Him, Lord to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.* They were sure of *this*: their hearts told them, that they were not deceived in Christ: and this being so, why should their faith give way, because their intellect was for a moment puzzled? And why should not disciples of Christ in our own days, when tempted to give up their faith by the exhibition of intellectual difficulties, which they cannot explain by the formulæ of every-day experience,—why should they not follow the example of S. Peter, and fall back upon truths, which their hearts will not allow them to let go? Why not take their stand upon the blessed truth, that God has visited and redeemed His people, and say, *To whom shall we go? Christ has the words of eternal life.*

LECT.
III.S. John vi.
67, 68, 69.

LECTURE IV.

THE MIRACLES OF CHRIST.

Preached on the Sunday after Easter.

S. JOHN I. I.

The Word was God.

LECT.
IV.

Distinction
between
the Resur-
rection
and other
Miracles.

It was remarked in my last Lecture, that in contemplating the miraculous events connected with the life of our blessed Lord, the Resurrection occupied a place quite distinct from that which can be assigned to any other individual miracle. You may take any one out of the general catalogue of mighty works recorded in the Gospel histories, and you may believe that you have found grounds, historical, critical, or of any other kind, such as to justify you in doubting the reality of the miracle; or to put the case in the strongest light possible, I will suppose that after due investigation you feel persuaded, that some one or more of the alleged miracles of Christ ought not to have been recorded as miracles performed by Him, that they are interpolations in the genuine evangelical narrative, or were wrongly reported, so that the history as we now have it does not accurately represent what took place; I will suppose even as much as this, and I say, that even if this should be the result of your examination, you may still hold your faith in the divine character of the Lord Jesus unshaken;

you may very well declare, that you will not give up your faith and your hope, because you find that the records of the life of Christ have not come down to us in as pure a condition as you might have expected, or because you have found it necessary to modify the views which you had formed of the nature of the sacred books themselves, and of the divine influence under which they were penned ; but you are untrue to your highest spiritual interests, if you allow a supposed blemish, in the picture which the Gospels contain, to cheat you out of the belief, that it is a genuine portrait of the Saviour of mankind. But the Resurrection certainly stands upon a ground of its own ; the whole credit of the Apostles is so bound up with its truth ; the tale runs so completely through and through their recorded thoughts, and words, and deeds ; that it is quite impossible to separate a complete and honest reception of the Gospel from the belief of this great transcendental fact. *If Christ be not raised*, we are in every sense of the words *yet in our sins*. LECT. IV. —

Observe, that it is not by any means my desire to insinuate the thought, that there is in reality a difference in the degrees of evidence and credibility belonging to the different miracles of our Lord. But I think it well that in dealing with evidences, we should consider what is of the essence of the Christian faith and what not, what is destructive of the Gospel, and what touches only certain familiar forms of conceiving the Gospel ; and though I am well aware, that I am here treading upon delicate and perhaps dangerous ground, inasmuch as it has been the plea, even of those who have to ordinary

It is desirable to consider what is necessary to the existence of the faith, and what not.

I Cor. xv. 17.

LECT.
IV.

apprehension utterly subverted the whole fabric of Christianity, and turned its history into a fable, that they have not all the while touched the true kernel of the religion, still this shall not deter me from calling the attention of young Christians to the fact, that they may possibly be sometimes reduced to their wit's end, as to their tenure of the faith, by an objection, which, if valid, will only go the length of modifying their conception of some particular portion of the scheme. Thus a man may be summoned to surrender unconditionally his faith in Christ, because he does not see how to reconcile with science the statements in the first chapter of Genesis ; or the same alternative may be placed before him, if he finds that he cannot justify some particular theory in which he may have been educated concerning the inspiration of the holy Scriptures. Therefore, although I would not encourage the disposition to criticise with too great boldness the various facts of the Lord's history, believing that we should ever take the shoes from our feet when standing upon such ground, and that we may well expect to be answered according to our folly if we consult in a proud self-conceited spirit the oracles of God, still I think that regarding the various portions of the sacred Scriptures, not as connected with practical piety and devotion, but in their relation to evidences, we should do well to observe for our own peace' sake, what points those are, in which if a wound be received it may be regarded as touching the vitals, and what points are those, concerning which this cannot be averred.

Now it does not admit of a reasonable doubt,

that the history of our Lord Jesus Christ is a miraculous history. It represents Him, as doing, not once or twice, but frequently, acts transcending human power and ordinary experience; even if one of them should be struck from the catalogue here, and another there, the general character of the life would not be altered; and the notion of retaining Christianity and freeing it from all supernatural elements, is one which cannot easily be regarded as otherwise than utterly hopeless; unless indeed you choose arbitrarily to define as Christianity a certain system of civilised morality, which the Apostles, if we may judge from their writings, would not have called by that name. We must, therefore, as Christians, hold ourselves committed in the most unqualified manner to a miraculous account of our Master; and if indeed miracles be objectively impossible, or (which in fact comes to much the same thing) subjectively incredible, then upon the proof of their impossibility or incredibility, I think we are bound as honest men to resign our faith.

LECT.
IV.

The history of Christ undeniably miraculous.

It is not necessary for my present purpose, nor indeed is it desirable, to attempt to define a miracle; because we might thus perhaps introduce a difficulty concerning the word, when we should all probably be agreed concerning the thing. If, for instance, we should speak of a miracle, as being an event transcending the course of nature, it might be necessary to define nature, and also to say what extent of experience should be sufficient to determine its course, inasmuch as in very remote epochs its course (upon the clear evidence of geology) was very different from what it is now. We will

Not necessary to define a miracle.
See Note 16.

LECT.
IV.

therefore endeavour to avoid such difficulties by reference to the acknowledged fact, that the history of our Lord does contain the account of deeds, which would not be admissible in ordinary biography,—blind men made to see, the lame to walk, the dead raised up, and the like. It may be, and doubtless it is, very desirable, that the essential idea of a miracle should be investigated, that the definition of a miracle should be accurately framed in words; but so far as we are just now concerned, we may safely omit the inquiry.

The supposed incredibility of a miracle the foundation of modern opposition to the Faith.

The point, to which at present I wish chiefly to direct attention, is this, that the fundamental principle of almost, if not quite, all the intellectual opposition in modern times to the truth of the Gospel, is the supposed incredibility of a miracle in itself. This ground of opposition had clearly no existence in the time of our Lord Himself; for the question, which then occurred to the minds of those who witnessed His deeds, was, *When Christ cometh, will He do more miracles than these which this man hath done?* Nor indeed could such a ground of opposition very easily suggest itself, either to the men of those days, or to those of the earlier ages of Christianity: it is peculiarly a modern objection. Nor can the fact, that such an objection should have great weight in modern days with the mind of a man regarding the Gospel from a purely intellectual point of view, be matter of surprise to any one, who considers how much the discovery of physical laws, and of the regularity of cosmical phenomena, is likely to tempt the mind to the rash generalization, that we have here revealed to us the whole of God's manner of working, and that

S. John vii.
31.

all things in heaven and earth can be included in the formulæ of a mechanical philosophy. Though indeed it may be remarked, that science has herself corrected the errors which might seem to have been drawn from her, and has given quite as distinct indications, as can be found in Scripture itself, of a personal Creator, and not a dead law of matter, being the God of the universe. But not to dwell upon this point now, I say that the line which has been taken by modern unbelief has been one, which we might have expected from observing the tone of mind likely to be fostered by modern science, and that this consists in disbelief in miracles as such,—not in objections to the character of Christ's miracles in particular, or the evidence for their truth, but fundamentally to miracles in themselves. The distinction amongst the various schools of unbelief may be said to consist chiefly in the manner, in which the miraculous phenomena of the Christian history are got rid of and explained.

And because it is very desirable, that we should perceive how thoroughly this is the character of the unbelief of modern times, and how it lies at the root of systems as much opposed to each other as any one of them to the orthodox faith, I will in a few words call to your minds the features of two or three of the schools, with the principles of which we are most familiar.

In the first place I will remind you of the method proposed by Hume, and with which we are well acquainted in this University, as being that against which Paley chiefly directed his evidences. Hume considered that he had supplied for all subsequent times a sufficient antidote to belief

Various
methods of
getting rid
of miracles.
See Note
17.

Method of
Hume.
See Note
18.

LECT.
IV.

in miracles, by the enunciation of the principle, that belief in a miracle involves the question of the relative value of experience and testimony, and that it is much more probable that testimony should be false than a miracle true. This principle, whether it were intended that such should be the result or no, brings into question the honesty and truthfulness of the Apostles, or rather it puts their dishonesty and imposture practically beyond question ; and, viewed in this light, it belongs perhaps to the most mischievous kind of attack that can be made upon the faith, and connects itself quite naturally with that school of licentious infidelity which for a time flourished in this country, and still more in France. The point, however, which I wish especially to observe is this, that although the principle of this method is professedly sceptical, yet the underlying postulate of it is the impossibility, and consequent incredibility, of a miracle. The attempt to shake the testimony of the early Christian writers does not profess to have originated in any strong grounds for suspicion of their honesty, in any peculiar looseness of their records, in any noticeable deficiency of their means of observation, or in any the like legitimate grounds of scepticism, but rather it is the presence of all those circumstances which give colour and credibility to testimony,—the coincidence of many witnesses,—the general reception of their story at the time,—the apparent disinterestedness of their conduct,—the impression of candour and honesty and conscious rectitude which must be produced by a study of their writings,—which rendered it necessary to propound a principle, strong enough to over-ride

all these ordinary arguments in favour of the truth of the Gospel history.

LECT.
IV.

But again: we may notice that mode of dealing with the Christian faith and of getting rid of the miraculous element, which is commonly distinguished as the Rationalistic. One essential difference between this method and that already noticed is this, that instead of taking its rise from the mind of a man, who wished to do away with the Christian faith as an historical imposture, it may be chiefly claimed as the property of one, who shewed the value which he attributed to the Christian records by writing a commentary upon them. The method consisted in the attempt, now universally regarded as hopeless, to explain the miracles of our Lord upon natural principles. It was thought, that by judicious investigation the supernatural element could be eliminated, and the moral and spiritual part of the Gospel left; that Jesus of Nazareth might be regarded as a mere man, and yet be looked upon as the great Teacher and Reformer of the human race, and the honesty of His disciples be left unimpeached. Whether this mode of treatment were in reality less mischievous than the former, is a question with which we need not now concern ourselves; though certainly this conclusion may be drawn by the way, (and it is a very valuable one), namely, that the method, which Hume propounded as the great escape from miracles, did not seem, in the eyes of a profoundly philosophic nation, adequate to perform the task assigned to it. And it may also be received as a satisfactory result, that the notion of imposture and priestcraft should be virtually given up, as not an adequate

Method of
Paulus.
See Note
19.

LECT.
IV.

explanation of the phenomena of the faith ; and that the phenomena themselves should be admitted to be such, as are at least worthy of the labour of studying them, and not such as can be exploded and forgotten under the influence of ridicule. But that which I chiefly wish to remark is this, that however different the rationalistic method may be from its predecessor, and however inadequate it may have proved, yet the postulate of the impossibility of a miracle is still the foundation of it : it was an attempt to get rid of the miraculous without destroying the whole fabric, and without damaging the moral character of the witnesses ; and instead of making use of the circumstance of the miraculous character of the history to get rid of the Christian religion, it was an endeavour to save the religion by giving up the miraculous part of it. The whole tone and character of the schools therefore may be different, but they have this as the common basis of their existence, the assumed incredibility of a miracle.

Method of
Strauss.
See Note
20.

There is one other method of treating the Christian history, which it will be desirable to mention, because it is the one which has of late been in the ascendant. This consists in the attempt to shew, that the life of Christ was originally altogether human in its proportions, and that it has subsequently been dilated into its present supernatural and assumed mythical condition. The writers of this school take their stand upon critical ground, and propose to themselves to shew what the original tale was, and how and why the various transcendental additions were made. They admit the entire inadequacy of the method, to

which I last referred, as a means of accounting for the phenomena presented by the Christian history, and propose to substitute for it a method depending upon recognised principles of criticism, and to clear the story from the fabulous accretions of time, as has in other cases been successfully done. How much would be left of what we usually regard as the Christian faith, supposing this critical process to be correct, and whether we could in any proper sense assert that we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we have professed to believe the scriptural account of Christ, are questions upon which I will not touch, except to observe by the way, that the writer who has put together in his "Life of Jesus" the net results (as it were) of this mode of treating our Creed, does nevertheless in the preface assert his conviction, that no injury is threatened to the Christian faith; the supernatural birth of Christ, His miracles, His resurrection and ascension still remaining as eternal truths, and so the essence resting inviolate; destroying, as he professes to do, the whole worth and character of the Gospels as vehicles of credible facts, annihilating the Creed of the Catholic Church, he still declares his admiration for Christianity, his unwillingness to injure its essence, and his persuasion that he has not injured it. If this declaration be made in irony, it is, of course, very contemptible; if it be serious, it must not be allowed to blind us to the dangers of following one, who, under the pretence of freeing our faith from spurious additions, destroys the possibility of faith altogether: but either way, it is a remarkable fact, that there should be found in

Strauss :
Leben Jesu.
Preface to
first edi-
tion.

LECT.
IV.

these days such an anxiety not to repudiate the name of Christ, such a desire (as I expressed it on a former occasion) to touch at least the hem of His garment, such a willingness, and more than willingness, to be reckoned amongst His disciples; it is for believers a tribute to the truth, which they cannot fail to notice, while to those whose faith has been shaken it may well be suggested as a question worthy of consideration, whether it be not probable, that the Catholic faith, having (as it has) points of contact with almost all the schools of unbelief, may not be the real centre of all, from which alone the truth can be discerned in its right proportions, and the various forms of error seen in their divergence from the truth. The principal remark however to be made is this, that in the case of this method of dealing with our religion, as in the case of others, the essential incredibility of a miracle is clearly the foundation of all; the necessity of setting free the history from all that can be called supernatural, in order to adapt it to the tone of philosophy and supposed requirements of a scientific age, is the thought which runs through the whole of this method of treating the recorded life of Christ.

Writers of
other
schools
agree in
the incredi-
bility of
miracles.

Some writers have advocated of late years the cause of unbelief, who would probably not allow themselves to belong to any one of the schools of which I have spoken; their main ground of objection to the Catholic faith would probably be alleged to be of a different class; nevertheless, I apprehend that they would give their assent to the principle of the incredibility of all recorded miracles, and that they would all agree in regarding the life of

our Lord, as commonly understood, in the light of an impossibility, however they might prefer to rest their main objections upon other grounds. And I think, therefore, that we are justified in saying, that we have here one great fundamental objection to the Christian faith, recognised by almost all its opponents, namely, the incredibility of miracles from the point of view occupied by modern Europe. Let us look at the objection carefully; and all the more so, because it would appear to be (as we have seen) the connecting link of so many different schools.

Are mira-
cles incre-
dible?

And first let us remember, that when we are speaking of miracles being credible or incredible, we are not speaking of miracles in general, but of certain particular miracles, namely, those of our Lord Jesus Christ. Hume, in his famous essay, having explained the nature of the principle upon which he proposed to deal with miracles, confines his application of it to the case of the miracles recorded in the Pentateuch; and having, as he supposes, destroyed the credit of these, leaves it to be inferred that the principle which will destroy the miracles of Moses will do as much for those of Christ. In which method of proceeding he seems to me to have been guilty of great, though it may be unintentional, injustice; since it ought at least to be proved, and not assumed, that the credit due to the history of our Lord depends upon the integrity of the ancient books of the Jews; it is an injustice, however, which I should not have thought it necessary in these days to comment upon, if it had not been for the purpose of illustrating what has just now been said, namely, that

The ques-
tion may
be confined
to those of
Christ.

See Note
21.

LECT.
IV.

in speaking of the credibility of miracles we do not speak of miracles in general, but of *Christ's miracles*. I do not say, that Moses did not perform the mighty works attributed to him in the book of Exodus ; I have no desire even to suggest such a view of the history ; but I do say, that even if it were proved that he did not, the question of the miracles of Christ would still remain to be dealt with upon its own ground. I think that we are bound in honesty to allow, that the Christian faith is inevitably bound up with a miraculous history ; but I protest against being called upon to give up my faith, in the event of its being rendered probable that the deeds of Moses, or Joshua, or Samson have been in any way magnified or modified in the narrative which has come down to our days. Pray observe, that I am not now expressing any opinion concerning the Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament ; I am only endeavouring to throw as strong a light as possible upon the fact, that *it is the miracles of Christ, with which we as Christians are vitally concerned* : if they be true, our faith is whole ; if they be false, our faith is destroyed. This can be asserted of no other miracles whatsoever ; and it may be added, that the right way to consider any other miraculous history is to look first at the miracles of Christ, and to discuss and estimate all other miracles when we have rightly studied *them*.

The question of the credibility of Christ's miracles depends very much upon our

Looking then to the miracles of Christ, shall we say, that they are credible, or no ? The answer to the question would seem to be contingent upon that which we are prepared to give to this other one, *What think ye of Christ ? whose Son is He ?*

If the answer be, that He is only the Son of Man, only like ourselves, then I do not say that His miracles become incredible, because we find that persons who have prided themselves on their philosophical cast of mind, and who have repudiated the divinity of our Lord, have yet believed them ; but certainly grave difficulties are thrown in the way ; and one cannot be surprised if there should be manifested a tendency, either by shaking the credit of witnesses, or by natural explanations of apparently supernatural phenomena, or by critical examination of documents, to reduce to the standard of man the acts of Him, who is supposed to have been but a man. Let it, however, be granted that on moral grounds we see no impossibility, but quite the contrary, in the alleged fact of God having taken our nature upon Himself, of Jesus Christ being rightly described as *the Word, who was in the beginning, who was with God, and who was God*, and then what becomes of the impossibility or incredibility of what we call miracles ? The wonderful works of Christ would then seem to be the natural spontaneous outcoming of the divine power, which was in Him ; the omnipotence of the word of Christ would seem at once to connect *the Word who was God*, spoken of in the first chapter of S. John's Gospel, with that creative word, of which we read in the first chapter of Genesis, *which spake, and it was done ; which commanded, and it stood fast*. The great miracle, in truth, is one, of the reality of which we cannot doubt, namely, the entrance of evil into this world, which God has made ; I grant that there is something inconceivably strange, something well-nigh

LECT.
IV.

belief concerning the nature of Christ.

S. John i.
1.

Ps. xxxiii.

9.
The great miracle is the existence of evil.

LECT.
IV.

incredible, something which it would scarcely have been impiety in the absence of experience to have pronounced impossible, in the fact of the kingdom of God, whom our reason infallibly teaches us to be perfect in wisdom and goodness, having been invaded by an evil power,—that this earth which was created by God very good should exhibit the appearance of a divided government, and have seemed sometimes almost wholly given up to the devil: but this state of the case is undeniable; it is no tale of priests; no mere dogma of the Church; no view resting upon the authority of Scripture only; it is the plain and painful truth, of which all history gives evidence, which daily experience forbids us to contradict, and to which our own hearts give a sorrowful assent: and supposing that the view of the diseased condition of a race, whom He had made in His own image and inspired with His own breath, render it not incredible, that God should for the healing of our infirmities become manifest to us in the flesh, why should we not also suppose that the phenomena of that wonderful manifestation would transcend ordinary human experience? Indeed, if Christ be that which He professed to be, would not the wonder be found in His performing no works, resembling those which He wrought when the worlds were made, rather than in His dealing with His creatures (as He is reported in the Gospels to have done) with an air of conscious authority, with the demeanour of a Master in His own house?

The con-
scious au-
thority of
Christ in
the per-
formance
of miracles.

And let me beg of you to notice, how entirely the mode of performing His miracles, attributed to the Lord in the Gospels, accords with this view

of the character in which He performed them, and how remarkably it stands out in contrast with the tone assumed by all others, to whom in Holy Scripture wonderful works are attributed. Moses is professedly an instrument in the hands of God : *Thus saith the Lord*, the burden of his message : the rod, with which he worked wonders, a type of his own impotence in himself to do any mighty deed : and be it observed, the only instance of a mighty work performed with an appearance of an assumption of personal power actually visited upon him as a sin ; *Hear now, ye rebels*, said Moses, *must we fetch you water out of this rock ? and Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice, and the water came out abundantly ;* but Moses and Aaron lost the privilege of bringing the people into the promised land, because they had not *believed God to sanctify Him in the eyes of the children of Israel*. So, again, we find Samson strong by reason of his vow : Elijah and Elisha, not examples of inherent power, but witnesses for the God of Israel and examples of the efficacy of prayer : Naaman altogether mistook the matter, when he thought that the prophet would strike his hand upon him, and so recover the leper. And once more, if we pass from the Old Testament to the New, we find the Apostles of Christ imitating to a certain extent their Master's works, but with this great distinction, that all is done in His Name, and that the very thing which they dread, as the source of all error and confusion and heresy, is the notion that they have any power in themselves. *Ye men of Israel*, said Peter, after the healing of the lame man at the Beautiful Gate,

LECT.
IV.

See Note
22.

Numb. xx.

S. James v.
17, 18.

2 Kings
v. 11.

Acts iii. 12.

LECT.
IV.Acts iv.
9, 10.Acts xiv.
14, 15.S. John I.
14. 1.S. Luke
vii. 14;
viii. 54.
S. John xi.
43.Import-
ance of
the distinc-
tion be-
tween
Christ's
miracles
and others.

why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk? And again before the Council, *If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by Him doth this man stand here before you whole.* And in the like spirit Paul and Barnabas repressed the zeal of the crowd, who imagined that they saw in them gods in human form. To Jesus Christ alone it belongs to depend upon the inherent power of His own word,—to appeal to none higher than Himself,—to be conscious of no effort, but to give in the simplicity of omnipotent majesty the infallible word of command,—to illustrate by His deeds those phrases of S. John, *the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and the Word was God.* Thus it was that He commanded the winds and the waves: thus that the diseases of men's bodies yielded to His touch: thus that the blind were able to see, when He, the Light of the world, gave them light: thus that the lame walked when He bade them: thus that, even in the case of the dead, the words, *I say unto thee, Arise!* or, *Lazarus, come forth!* were sufficient at once to break the bands of death, and to throw new life into a corpse.

This character of our Lord's miracles is worthy of all possible attention; indeed it is *the* feature, upon which to fix our minds if we would compare the miracles of Christ with any other, whether pretended or real. It is easy to say, that all religions

profess to be affirmed by miracles, and that the Christian religion is in that respect only like many others : but let any one reverently contemplate the miracles of Christ and say whether they really *are* like other miracles, whether they do not differ in kind from all others, recorded either in Scripture or elsewhere : and let him further note that they cease to be miracles, in so far as a miracle is connected with a sense of wonder, when we regard them in the light of that revelation concerning the person of the doer of them, which such passages as the text contain.

LECT.
IV.

If it be suggested, that it is quite as hard to believe, that God should manifest Himself in the flesh, as that Jesus of Nazareth should have worked miracles, I might reply, that the purpose of these lectures is not to explain that one great fundamental mystery, but rather to shew, how in the light of it, as an admitted Catholic truth, all other doctrines are seen in harmony, and almost all other difficulties vanish. But besides this, I would have you to observe, that although the manifestation of God in the flesh is confessedly a mystery,—always put forward in Scripture as such,—characterised in one well-known passage as emphatically *the* mystery of godliness,—yet the difficulty of believing in the truth of this mystery is one of an altogether different class, from that of believing in the mere naked fact of a man having performed such deeds as we call miraculous. We have here no question of the relative value of testimony and experience, no objections from a supposed course of nature ; we have risen into a higher and spiritual region, in which there are other opinions to be taken besides

Objection
that it is as
difficult to
believe in
the Incar-
nation as in
Miracles,
answered.

LECT.
IV.

those of the wise and prudent. The question of mere miracles is one, which may present itself in different forms to different men, according to their education, or tone of thought; but the question of the manifestation of God in the flesh is one, of which the universal heart of mankind can and will form a judgment. The voice of a man speaking in man's words the love of God to His creatures, declaring to them the pardon of their sins, sympathising with their infirmities, revealing to them those things which it chiefly concerns them to know and which no other had been able to reveal,—this

Ps. xxix. 4.
Prayer-
book
Version.

glorious voice of God is one which speaks too clearly to the heart, which realises too completely the longing dreams of humanity, which is too completely a Gospel to mankind, to allow the confessed mystery of the manner of its utterance to make men in general sceptical concerning the truth of the utterance itself. And of this I am persuaded, that he, who, burdened with a sense of sin and infirmity, has felt in his own soul the truth, that

S. Mark ii.
10.

the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins, need not stumble at any intellectual difficulties, when called upon to believe, that the same Son of Man was able to say with authority in the days of His flesh, *Arise, take up thy bed, and walk.*

ver. 9.

LECTURE V.

THE INSPIRATION OF HOLY SCRIPTURE.

Preached on Sunday, April 22, 1855.

S. JOHN V. 39.

Search the Scriptures ; for in them ye think ye have eternal life : and they are they which testify of me.

FROM whatever point of view it may be proposed to regard the doctrines of our religion, with reference to the difficulties which may attach to the reception of them in our own days, it is scarcely possible to omit from our consideration the meaning and nature of that divine inspiration, which we attribute to the Holy Scriptures. Hence I feel bound in this course of sermons not to shrink from dealing with a subject, which upon some grounds I would gladly have left untouched.

LECT.
V.

Necessity
of consider-
ing the
subject of
Inspira-
tion.

Looked upon merely in the light of an example of the application of the principle, which I have already in several instances endeavoured to illustrate, I could not wish for a better instance, nor one more likely to be practically useful, of the manner in which that principle throws light into the dark places of doctrine, than that afforded by the question of the Inspiration of the Bible. And yet it is not inconsistent to speak of Inspiration, as of a subject which one would desire, if possible, to have left untouched. For in approaching it from any side, I see clearly two dangers lying in the way.

Reasons
for desiring
to avoid it.

LECT.
V.

Two dan-
gers lying
in the way.

On the one hand there is the danger of shaking the confidence of devout and faithful persons in the authority of the Word of God. It is no light thing even to hold as a question to be argued and discussed, any doctrine upon which the spiritual lives of thousands depend : and it is possible that you may do a man an almost irreparable injury, even in endeavouring to prove to him that what he believes is true, if in the proof you deal with his faith so roughly as to disorganise his religious and reverential feelings : just as we may fancy a picture to be proved to be genuine, but to have lost its finer tones by the rude handling of those who examined it. Hence, even though we may have no intention of broaching new and strange doctrines, though to pretend to any theological discovery may be the thing furthest from our thoughts,—we cannot but remain mindful of the fact, that we are treading on holy ground, and very delicate ground, when we approach the question of the Inspiration of the Word of God. Then on the other hand, there is always the danger of doing mischief by advancing, with the best intentions, views upon a subject of this kind, which will not bear the test of close examination. A person may easily build up a theory of inspiration, and the theory may satisfy himself ; but when it comes to be carefully criticised, it may be found that as a scientific theory, it cannot be upheld : and so it falls : and if it fall alone, no great harm may be done ; but unhappily there is danger of the general appreciation of the character of the Bible being injured by the breaking down of theories concerning it ; as though an architect should build a buttress

against an ancient building, and should build it upon a bad foundation, and the buttress should fall, and throw suspicion upon the foundations of the building which it was intended to support. And in matter of fact I believe it will be found to be true, that the chief difficulties concerning the question of Inspiration have arisen, not from anything in the Bible itself, so much as from theories respecting it, which have been built upon insecure foundations by pious men zealous for the integrity of the truth.

LECT.
V.

See Note
23.

It is therefore with a full sense of the delicate nature of the subject upon which we are entering, and an earnest prayer to the Author of inspiration in these as in past days to preserve me from speaking anything contrary to the truth, that I venture to invite your attention to a consideration of the character of the Holy Scriptures from the point of view belonging to this course of Sermons. I need hardly say, that I neither hope nor desire to exhaust such a subject as this ; but it will be found possible to embrace within (comparatively speaking) narrow limits, that view of it which I propose to give ; and I have the better hope of being able to avoid the dangers belonging to the subject, and of being able to treat it in such a manner as to make it subservient to the great purpose of encouraging faith and reverence and love towards the Word of God, in consequence of the very fact, that I do *not* intend to offer you a complete theory of Inspiration, but rather to suggest that such a theory is unnecessary and perhaps impossible, and to urge as the most sound and wholesome view that which may be taken of this,

No theory
of Inspira-
tion will be
offered in
these Lec-
tures.

LECT.
V.

as of so many other subjects, from the standing point which is supplied by the Catholic doctrine of the being of our blessed Lord.

The diffi-
culty of the
subject lies
in its *scien-
tific treat-
ment*.

And here let me make this general remark, that the whole difficulty of this subject would seem to lie in its scientific treatment. So long as a person regards the Bible in the light of a practical guide to his life, and as the storehouse of spiritual and Christian truths, he will be able without any sense of difficulty to speak of it as the Word of God, or as the Volume of Inspiration, or to describe it by any of those titles in which devout Christians in all ages have endeavoured to embody their sense of the unique and precious character of the book. And so we find, as a matter of experience, that thousands of plain practical men and women do reverence the Bible as the utterance of God's Spirit, and make it the rule of their life, and never find any cause to imagine that they have been following a delusion, but contrariwise gain from year to year an increased and evergrowing conviction, that they have been following the true light, which God has in His mercy given for their guidance in the darkness of this world. But as soon as the question,—What is the Bible? becomes one of science and not of religion, then forthwith a hundred difficulties start up, which were not seen before; those phrases which embodied the reverential feelings of a Christian soul, and which were precious as discharging that office, are found to lose much of their meaning as soon as they are submitted to a scientific analysis,—or at least, those words and phrases which seemed to the religious mind to express the whole truth of the matter, and

which indeed were to such a mind vehicles of most valuable truth, are found to require definition and explanation before they possess any scientific value at all. The simple Christian may well be content to believe, that *all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works*; but the theologian has to ask and answer the question,—What does Inspiration mean?

LECT.
V.

² Tim. iii.
16, 17.

Of course such questions as this must be asked: it is with no desire of representing scientific theological inquiries as unnecessary or mischievous, that I draw the distinction between the manner in which the character of the Bible, as the inspired book, presents itself to a simple Christian, and that in which it presents itself to the mind of a theological student. I know very well, that all investigations of truth rightly conducted must be for good; and not only so, but that positive evil must arise from the absence of such investigations: for this result would almost certainly follow, that views which have approved themselves to certain devotional minds would be maintained as being scientifically true, and necessary to be held by all Christians as articles of faith; and the attempt to fix upon all minds a yoke, which they would certainly be unable to bear, would probably have the effect of driving many to indifference, and some to infidelity. And indeed it is a question worthy of solemn consideration, whether almost as much mischief has not been done to the cause of Christian faith, by those who have endeavoured to

The scientific treatment is quite necessary.

LECT.
V.

force upon their brethren untenable views of the nature of the Holy Scriptures, as by those who have rudely treated them as merely human books.

The true meaning of inspiration not successfully sought in Christian antiquity.

And here I would observe, that the question of the meaning of the term inspiration, as applied to the Scriptures, is one, concerning which we cannot hope to gain so much light from the opinions of Christian antiquity, as we may in the case of some others. Indeed it seems to me to be essentially a modern question ;—one, the great interest and importance of which are found in the general tone given to human thought by the accuracy of modern methods in all branches of scientific and learned research. It may perhaps be said with truth, that to have to deal with questions of this kind, is one of the peculiar trials of thinking men in this age ; and to shew how they may be treated, without turning our backs upon principles recognised in all branches of human knowledge, is a work, which, if well performed, would be almost the greatest boon conceivable to the Christian Church. It helps us little to be able to say, that the Scriptures were in all ages revered as inspired, to quote the devout expressions of respect with which they were ever mentioned by the fathers of the Church ; for though we may conclude from this, that a doctrine of inspiration was always held (concerning which in fact there can be no manner of doubt), we may still find ourselves at a loss, when we endeavour to say, what that doctrine was, or whether it be now tenable.

See Note
24.

Allusion to
Inspira-
tion in the
Nicene
Creed.

On this account I shall not dwell upon that, which some persons might consider to be a very important view of this subject, namely, the general

opinion of ancient Christian writers. I shall however not fail to notice, that the almost total omission of any reference to a doctrine of Inspiration in the Creeds of the Church is a fact of some importance, both as illustrating the feeling upon the question in early times, and as indicating the probable danger of dogmatizing too positively in the present day. The only allusion to the subject appears to be the sentence in the Nicene Creed, in which we profess our faith in the Holy Ghost, *who spake by the prophets*; the Creed thus declaring that the Third Person in the blessed Trinity, in whom we Christians believe, was no new agent in the world, sent into it for the first time by our Lord Christ at His Ascension, but the same who had dwelt in the ancient Church, and had taught the prophets to speak mysteries. And here, be it observed, we have a full declaration of the fact, that the Holy Spirit does speak in the Church, but no attempt whatever to define the mode or measure of His Inspiration.

LECT.
V.

See Lee
*On the In-
spiration
of Holy
Scripture,*
page 73.

Nor can I fail to observe also in this connection, that although English divines have written so often and so much upon the question of inspiration, and have sometimes assumed that there is a certain orthodox view on the subject, still if we look to the formularies of the Church of England we shall find, that there is a remarkable absence of dogmatic determination of the question. The Articles speak of Holy Scripture containing *all things necessary to salvation*, and they tell us that under the name of Holy Scripture are understood certain *Canonical Books, of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church*; they affirm more-

The absence of definition of Inspiration from the formularies of the Church of England.

Art. VI.

LECT.
V.

Art. XX.

over, that the Church, although it has *authority in Controversies of Faith*, yet may not *so expound one place of Scripture that it be repugnant to another*; and in speaking of rites and ceremonies, it is provided, that in them nothing be ordained contrary to God's Word. Thus the supremacy of the Holy Scriptures, the inappellable character of their authority, their truly divine nature as emphatically God's Word, all this is acknowledged; but no phrase, or word, or hint occurs, as to the manner in which that divine influence was communicated to the writers, in virtue of which they are said to have been inspired. And perhaps from such omission it might be deemed no unfair conclusion, that in the judgment of the Church of England this subject is most safely left in obscurity; but whether we draw this conclusion or not, this we certainly may do, we may claim the liberty which the Church allows us, and we may refuse to admit the authority of any private decision of a question, which the Church has, apparently with design, left open.

This
liberty not
to be
abused.

Let me however guard against being misunderstood. I by no means wish to turn the liberty, which the Church gives us, into license. I do not wish to take advantage of the absence of dogmatic determination of the question of the manner of the inspiration of Holy Scripture, for the purpose of insinuating any low and insufficient views of that inspiration: it would be dishonest to pretend to mistake an abstinence from definition of the manner, for an implied negation of the fact. Doubtless no words could have expressed too strongly for the judgment of those concerned in the composition of the Articles of the Church of England, the

doctrine of the infallible authority of Holy Writ; the instances which have been quoted prove this abundantly; and indeed, when they spoke of the Scriptures as God's Word, what could they do more? What more plenary inspiration could they assert for the Bible, than by calling it the Word of God? All that they omitted to do was, to define scientifically, in what manner the message of God to mankind came to assume the form of a human book,—by what process God's speech became clothed in human language,—how much of human fallibility was introduced by this human garb,—how far the indwelling Spirit of God preserved the book from possibility of corruption: all this, the consideration of which the Articles of the Church of England have expressly avoided, precisely constitutes the task, with which sometimes modern divines have perplexed themselves, and not unfrequently their readers too. And while I admit that divines have a right to speculate upon such points if they will, I think we may protest against their conclusions being canonized as orthodox,—not only on the ground of the injustice of putting upon our necks a yoke which the Church does not put upon them, but also upon much more general grounds,—because the freezing up of the living principle of the utterance of the Holy Ghost by human lips into some dry formula of plenary, verbal, or literal inspiration, does seem as well fitted as almost any process conceivable to expose the whole fabric of the faith, and the character of Holy Scripture, to the rude attacks of subtle adversaries. In one word, I would desire to maintain the freedom which the Church of England permits,

LECT. V. not because I wish to degrade the Bible into a human book, but just because I am anxious to uphold its character as the Book of Scripture *given by inspiration of God*.

Objection
to certain
theories of
Inspira-
tion.

See Note
25.

Now it will not be according to the plan of this Lecture to discuss the various theories, which have been devised by different divines, of the Inspiration of Holy Scripture : but it will be necessary for me to state an objection, which appears to me to lie against the greater number of such theories. Attention does not seem to have been duly given to the fact, that the word *inspiration* must in the nature of things be a word used to express a certain quality of a book known upon other grounds to exist, and cannot rightly be regarded as a word from which by a deductive process the qualities of the book can be determined. A writer starts for instance with the principle, that the Bible is inspired,—is the Word of God,—is the message of God to man,—or the like; and from this principle undertakes to assert, that certain propositions *must* be true concerning it. He says, for example, that it cannot contain any statements contrary to the truths of science, or that it cannot contain historical errors as to matters of fact, or that it cannot contain internal discrepancies. Now I do not say, that any one of these characteristics, declared to be impossible, does in reality belong to the Bible; but I wish to know upon what principle any one can venture to assert positively, that the discovery of their existence strips the Bible of its divine character? If we had any other instance of a divine record, from the examination of which we could deduce a knowledge of the general features which belong to such

utterances of God's Spirit, we might then perhaps be in a state to say, whether the Bible satisfies the necessary conditions or not ; but seeing that by hypothesis the Bible stands by itself,—that its very name asserts for it an unique existence, as *the Book*, κατ' ἐξοχήν,—it seems manifestly contrary to all sound principles of reasoning to undertake to say, *à priori*, what it must or must not be, to make its name the rule for judging of its contents, instead of an expression descriptive of contents whose quality is otherwise determined. Yet this is the principle, upon which the question of inspiration is frequently argued ; and so it is, that writers fret themselves, for instance, to shew that the Mosaic cosmogony can be brought into harmony with modern science, and that many who read their writings feel an anxiety about the issue ; or that some speak unworthily of scientific results, because it is assumed that a discrepancy established would damage the claim of the Scriptures to divine inspiration. And the notion of the possibility of historical inaccuracies, errors as to matters of fact, is combated upon ground of the same kind. Now, of course, the Mosaic cosmogony is a fair subject for examination ; any one, who reverences the Scriptures, will believe that there are good reasons why it should be such as it is ; so also is the historical character of the various sacred books, and our faith must be small if we fear the results of the study of them ; but I submit, that it is contrary to all sound principles to examine either the one or the other, with the foregone conclusion that certain results will destroy the claim to inspiration, when we have no other means of knowing

LECT.
V.

what the inspiration of a book means, besides the examination of these very writings.

An illus-
tration.

Let me illustrate, by reference to a somewhat parallel case, the danger of asserting *à priori* what inspiration must or must not imply. I say a *somewhat parallel* case, because there are obvious distinctions between the case which I am about to adduce and that of Holy Scripture, while at the same time there is enough of resemblance to enable us to transfer to one a lesson of caution gained from the other. Of all God's works there is one, which stands out conspicuously from the rest as the fairest and most noble: that work is Man: and

Gen. ii. 7.

of Man we read, that *God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul*,—an inspired work of God this, if ever there were one: now suppose that we should take our stand upon the assertion of man's inspiration, and pretend to declare what must be the character and properties of a being created in God's image, and inspired by His Spirit; what attributes should we consider to be too exalted? and should we not shrink with instinctive horror from the thought, that this inspired work of God would rebel against his Maker upon the first temptation offered? I do not wish to overstate the analogy between this case and that of Holy Scripture, regarded as inspired; but certainly we are justified in making use of such analogy as exists, for the purpose of warning us, that as the history of man's fall would have unquestionably belied any previously drawn conclusions as to the character of man, so it is unwise and dangerous in any other case to fancy, that we can certainly declare, what *must* be the characteristics of any person

or thing, in which God's Spirit is said to dwell. If we are deceived in the case of a man, why should we dogmatize positively in that of a book ?

LECT.
V.

It may be further remarked, that the modest and cautious tone of mind, taught by the experience of modern science, might well have suggested the rashness of the method of treating theological subjects, so frequently adopted by divines. The old Greek philosopher would take some general principle, the truth of which he imagined that he could discover in the nature of things, or which he assumed as a mere hypothesis, and from this principle he would construct a cosmos ; and we all know the result of this philosophizing ; we all know that it issued in emptiness, that it did not (as indeed it could not) lead to any knowledge of the secrets of nature ; it led to systems, and schools, and strifes, and debates, but did not advance mankind upon the road to truth ; and the real path of truth was then entered upon, when throwing aside all vague hypotheses, as to what must or what must not be, philosophers were content to become as little children, and to examine teachably and humbly what really was. It may seem strange, that this same principle of seeking truth should not have entered more fully than it has into theological investigations. I do not say, that the method of physics requires no modification when it is applied to theology ; but certainly the principle of seeking truth must in the two sciences be the same ; and certainly also, we frequently find in our own days methods applied in divinity, partaking of that same fallacious character, which in physics has been long ago exploded, and the

The cautious tone of mind inculcated by modern science.

See Whewell's *History of the Inductive Sciences*.

LECT.
V.

destruction of which gives date to the true birth-day of modern scientific knowledge.

Inspira-
tion re-
garded
from the
point of
view be-
longing
to these
Lectures.

Regarding then the question of the Inspiration of the Bible from the point of view proposed as the basis of these Lectures, I may, perhaps, best express what I wish to convey by saying, that instead of making faith in our Lord Jesus Christ depend upon the doctrine of inspiration, I would rather give as the chief ground for my belief that the Bible is an inspired book,—that it may, in the truest sense, be called the Word of God,—this great and weighty reason, that it testifies of Christ. Professing to believe in Jesus Christ, according to the Nicene Creed, and taking the Bible as the record of Him, who is that which the Creed declares Him to be, and who has done that which the Creed declares Christ to have done, I see no better way of describing that book than by saying that it is emphatically God's own book,—His message,—His word. I may be told that the Creeds rest upon the Bible, and that, therefore, the Bible must not be made to rest upon the Creeds; this however is scarcely a true representation of the fact, for, historically, the Creeds do *not* rest on the Bible, they are well-known to have an independent foundation; and though we rightly say that they may be proved out of Scripture, still they have an additional value, as having not been themselves extracted from Scripture, and, therefore, as independent epitomes of the faith throwing a very valuable light upon Scripture. But granting that this were otherwise, that is, granting that the Creeds should be regarded merely as formulæ drawn from the Bible, as any Christian might

extract the chief articles of faith from that source in our own days, still there would be nothing illogical in the view now given ; because, in order to fix our faith upon our Lord Jesus Christ, in accordance with the Creeds, we should manifestly have no absolute need of any doctrine of inspiration whatever, but only of the persuasion that the four Gospels were worthy of credit, regarded simply as ordinary human histories. The question of belief in Christ may obviously be argued, independently of any doctrine of inspiration ; and, indeed, there are undeniably many earnest Christians,—men who hold all the mysterious facts and doctrines concerning our blessed Lord,—who would, nevertheless, reject every one of the theories of inspiration usually supported in this country. I am not saying, that there is no true doctrine of inspiration, but only that belief in our Lord Jesus Christ is possible without any question concerning inspiration being mooted ; just as belief was possible during His own abode upon earth, when men were able to see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and handle with their hands the very Word of Life, and no written medium of His Gospel was needed at all. Suppose, then, that we have been led (it matters not how) to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, which is the prime necessity of every human soul ; it may have been by learning the faith from our mothers' lips, or we may have found it in the Creeds of the Catholic Church, or have gained it by study of the Gospels, or in any other way ; but suppose that we *have* been led to faith in Christ, then may we not fairly stand upon this Rock, this sure foundation, this corner-stone

1 John i. 1.

LECT.
V.Gen. iii.
15.

laid in Zion, and from it contemplate the structure and character of the Bible? And if we find, that the very end and purpose of that book are to testify of Christ, that His person crosses the first page of it in a mystic shadow, and that the substance of that person becomes more and more clearly portrayed in it as the fulness of time approaches, and that it is His birth, and life, and death, and resurrection, and ascension, and the development of His kingdom, which alone give unity to all the scattered elements of which the Bible is composed,—that this is what makes it a *book*, and not a mere bundle of Hebrew antiquities,—then may we not rightly make use of this its great aim and purpose, in order to describe the character of its contents? Need we fear to say, that the book has been inspired by God's Spirit, that it is in the highest sense God's Word, when we recognise Christ as the great subject of its teaching?

An objection considered.

It may perhaps be urged, that the Scriptures were regarded as inspired before Christ came into the world; and I might answer, that, although this is perfectly true, yet the thing which we need is, not so much the fact that the Jews revered their Scriptures as the word of God, as a *locus standi* from which we as Christians can conscientiously do the same. But I would rather lay stress upon the following remark, namely, that in reality the Jews did estimate their books upon a principle nearly identical with that which I am proposing for Christians; they valued those books, because they contained the history of their national redemption; they did not regard themselves as the

Church of God, merely because they had the authority of a book to which to appeal, but they believed what they had heard with their ears, and what their fathers had told them of the great works done in the time of old; they joined in the worship of Jehovah, they kept His sabbath, they presented themselves at the Passover, they believed in the efficacy of sacrifice and in the forgiveness of sins, and they valued their sacred books because they threw more light than anything else upon the privileges which they enjoyed. At least, whether this be actually the view taken of the Scriptures by a Jew or no, certainly it is a view which he might very reasonably have taken, if the tone of thought in olden days had led men to analyze the meaning of their words, when they spoke of their sacred books as being the Word of God; and be it observed, it is a view, from which he could not have been driven, by the alleged existence in the books, either of historical inaccuracies or of scientific errors.

LECT.
V.

See Deut.
vi. 20—23.

I professed in the opening of this sermon, that I had no intention of presenting a complete theory of inspiration; indeed I believe that no theory is necessary, and that probably all theories will be found incomplete; as the operation of the Spirit in the heart and life of man, according to our Lord's own words to Nicodemus, is past human ken, the commencement and conclusion of the regenerating work alike lying beyond the limits of a theory, so probably the same character will be found to belong to the operations of the same Spirit, when its work is to convey the mind of God in human utterances to man. You will bear in mind, however, that

Perhaps
no theory
possible.

S. John iii.
8.

LECT.
V.

what has been said in this sermon by no means adjudicates between different theories of inspiration; whether any of them be tenable, or whether it be a question which is the least untenable, still we need a ground upon which to stand, deeper and stronger than them all, and that ground is Christ Himself; Christ is greater than all theories, and he who believes in Him will not be confounded. The true support of the human soul, which realises the horror of being without God in the world, is not to believe that God has spoken by a book precisely in this manner, or precisely in that, but to believe that God, who has spoken to mankind

Heb. i. 1, 2. *at various times and in divers manners, has spoken unto us by His Son.* If this be the uppermost thought in an earnest mind, all other things will be added; and a devout Christian may say concerning the Bible,—there is much in the form and the substance of this book, which I find it difficult to reconcile with any theory; much perhaps that is different from what I should have expected to discover in the Scriptures of God; much which when I think upon it appears too hard for me; but I am sure, that I am right in speaking of it, and prizing it, as the Word of God, because I find that from one end to the other it testifies of Christ.

The character of the Bible as the witness to Christ.

Conclusion.

The limits, which it is desirable to put to a pulpit discourse, prevent me from developing more fully to-day the view which I have attempted to lay before you; and I must defer to my next lecture some additional remarks, which I think very necessary to be made. I wish especially to shew the advantage of the mode of considering the

subject here advocated, with reference to that class of difficulties, which some of the ordinary views of inspiration enable a caviller, or a scoffer, to throw in a young Christian's way. And I wish also to guard what has been said against perversion, and to shew that it is no bar to the reception of the profoundest view of the contents of the Bible, that the devoutest Christian was ever yet led to take. Leaving then for my next lecture this very necessary supplement to what has been already advanced, allow me to conclude the present with a few words of exhortation, arising immediately from those of our Lord in the text.

Search the Scriptures, said Christ, *for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me*;—ἐρευνᾶτε τὰς γραφάς—the words may be imperative according to our English version, or they may be a testimony to the zeal with which the Scriptures were studied by the Jews: for ourselves it matters little which way the words be taken, because either way they imply that the Jews had not found the treasures which their books contained, and therefore either way they may be regarded as a warning, that we too may have the Scriptures in our hands, and may not use them aright.

LECT.
V.

The Scriptures to be studied diligently;

Now I shrink from the thought of saying anything concerning the Scriptures, which shall savour of narrow and superstitious views concerning them, and to which the consciences of good and reasonable men will not assent: but these two plain remarks I submit to you with confidence.

but with two precautions.

First.—You cannot search the Scriptures aright, if you treat them as mere subjects for human

LECT.
V.S. Luke x.
21.

scholarship, and expect their meaning to be evolved by mere exegesis and ingenuity. Useful and necessary as all human appliances are, still it is clear, that if the Bible be inspired by God's Spirit, it must address itself to what is spiritual in man, and not to his understanding only. It is a book not for scholars, but for men; and if it be read amiss, what wonder that it should sometimes verify that divine dispensation of which our Lord spoke, when He rejoiced that things hidden from the wise and prudent were revealed to babes?

Secondly.—You cannot search the Scriptures aright, if you approach them with the assumption, that you are competent to assign beforehand the form which shall belong to an inspired book. If the Bible be God's book, it will certainly partake of that mysterious character which belongs to all the works of God. And therefore to approach in the spirit of one, who would dictate to our Heavenly Father how He ought to speak, is to come with a temper of mind, which can only be right on the supposition of the Bible not being God's book at all.

In such ways as these you cannot search aright. You may become learned biblical scholars; or you may rend the Bible to tatters by ingenious speculations, and weave religious theories out of the shreds of it; but you cannot love the Scriptures as the fountain of eternal life. And I know of only one way in which you can do this,—ever finding in the Scriptures new treasures of wisdom and knowledge,—ever recognising them, from the very depths of your conscience, and in the full light of your manly reason, as the guide which God has

given you,—and that way is, to regard them as LECT.
V. testifying of Christ. *They are they which testify of* -----
Me, said our Lord, speaking of the Old Testament
only: much more may we find in the words an
argument for searching the Scriptures with diligence
and humility and thankfulness, now that the New
Testament has been added as the solution of the
enigmas of the Old. He who searches thus will
not find himself in darkness, because his book will
be illuminated by that *true light which lightens* S. John i.
9.
every man who comes into the world.

LECTURE VI.

THE INSPIRATION OF HOLY SCRIPTURE.

Preached on Sunday, April 29, 1855.

2 TIM. III. 16, 17.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness :

That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

LECT.
VI.

The text represents the subject in its practical bearing upon Christian life.

IN taking this passage as a text for a sermon, in continuation of the subject discussed last Sunday, I do not propose to enter into the question, whether the English version gives correctly the meaning of S. Paul's words, or whether the Apostle should rather be understood to assert, that *all Scripture given by divine inspiration is profitable for doctrine*, and the rest : because both methods of construing the language would assume the existence of certain Scriptures, which could be properly characterised as *given by inspiration of God* ; and neither method would seem to give us more assistance than the other, in defining dogmatically the limits of the influence described under the name of *inspiration*. But I have quoted the words of the text for this reason, namely, that they put the whole subject of the inspiration of the Word of God in the light, in which it ought always

to be viewed; they represent the subject in its practical bearing upon the Christian life; Holy Scripture, being given by inspiration of God, becomes thereby, according to S. Paul, not a curious problem for the ingenious, not a stumbling-block for the weak in faith, not a convenient point of attack for the enemy, but profitable to the man of God,—*profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.* This is a view of the Scriptures which is wholesome at all times; it is especially one, which I would desire to leave impressed upon the minds of those who have listened to these lectures, at a time when for a season the course is brought to a close*: I should be grieved if the impression remained, that we had been engaged in doubtful disputations, and that the effort had not been honestly made, to bring the subjects discussed into connexion with the practical concerns of Christian life.

Now, I endeavoured to point out in my last lecture, that instead of laying down a theory of inspiration, discussing whether it was to be understood that the writers were by inspiration made the involuntary penmen of a higher power, or whether they were only preserved from error in matters of fact, or whether they acted under a mere general superintendence,—instead of pursuing a course of this kind, we might very well follow the exactly opposite one; and, commencing with the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, might

General
view of In-
spiration
given in
the pre-
ceding
Lecture.

* The months of April and October are those allotted to the Hulsean Lectures.

LECT.
VI.

— speak of the Scriptures as the Word of God, or as inspired, with reference to this their great aim and purpose, and that having secured this standing-point, we might, without anxiety, examine the Bible, and see what its character appeared to be. Of course it is conceivable,—at least, it is an hypothesis which an unbeliever has a right to make,—that the examination of the book may lead to the discovery of its being so entirely opposed to all principles of morality, as to make it incredible that it should be in any sense the organ of a divine voice speaking to man : but I wish to insist upon the point, that short of some such complete breaking down of the character of the Bible, against which the estimation in which it has been held by thousands of good men, may, perhaps, be deemed a sufficient guarantee, no discrepancy between the notions which we may have formed *à priori* of what must be or ought to be, and the conclusions which we are compelled to adopt by the examination of facts, ought to have any weight in troubling our minds. Shew me that the incarnation of the Eternal Son is a fact unworthy of the loving character of our Father in Heaven, or that the message of God to man by the human lips of Christ is one which man did not require, or in any way break down the possibility of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and then I admit that the whole idea of the Bible vanishes, and that the very notion of inspiration may be a dream ; but I submit, that you cannot, by attacking inspiration first, overthrow the Christian faith afterwards, and that it is a matter very nearly concerning our peace not to attach our minds to any such particular

view of the Bible, as that we should tremble for the stability of our faith in the event of that view being placed in jeopardy. LECT.
VI.

For be it observed, (and I think that it is worth while to consider the extreme case,) that the entire loss of the Scriptures would not of necessity destroy the Christian faith: great as would be the loss involved, and deeply as all wise and good men would deplore it, still the entire disappearance of the book from the earth would not prevent us from holding our faith in Him, who is the ever-living Word of God. And this being so, it is incredible that the safety of the faith should be dependent upon the maintenance of some particular theory, as to the manner in which the contents of the Bible came to be that which they are. Of course, any demonstration of the falsity of what the New Testament contains would be a disproof of the Christian faith; but I am not now arguing concerning the credit due to the writers of the New Testament, regarded as human authors, but as to the claim which they may have to be regarded in a light higher than human, and as to what that light may be: and I wish to lay stress upon the point, that it is both unwise and unnecessary to predicate a certain character as belonging to the Scriptures, the disproof of which may damage our faith in Christ, and the proof of which is not essential to that faith.

I now return to the position from which we have already contemplated the doctrine of inspiration, and shall endeavour to point out the manner in which it enables us to regard several questions of considerable importance. And the principle

The entire loss of the Scriptures would not be the loss of the Faith.

Application of the views of these lectures to several important questions.

LECT.
VI.

upon which I desire to rest is this, that having taken the term *inspired* to imply the great aim and purpose of Holy Scripture, as the record of the revelation of God to man in Jesus Christ, we may safely trust ourselves to examine candidly the phenomena of the structure of the Bible, and need not be either alarmed or surprised, if we find that in this, as in many other instances, God's ways are different from our own, and His manner of inspiring His book different from what we might have expected it to be.

The purity
of the text
of Scrip-
ture.

For example, it was not an unnatural, nor by any means a discreditable thought, that God would by His special providence preserve the purity of His own Word, so far as the text is concerned, in a manner which does not belong to books in general.

See Note
26.

Reasoning *à priori* men came to the conclusion, that if the Bible were inspired, it *must* be so preserved: if not, they foresaw possible evils, which might destroy its character; it might in process of time become seriously corrupt, one copy might contradict another, it might be impossible to say what God had really spoken. Much pious feeling would be on the side of this view; and it would maintain its ground, until scholars collated the copies; and then they would see, that in matter of fact there were varieties of reading in this, as in other books,—that the same rules, which were necessary to correct the errors of other manuscripts, applied to those of the Scriptures,—that here, as in the case of human books, there was employment for all the skill that could be brought to bear. Now I do not know, to what extent the faith of a person, who had been educated in the belief that

the purity of the text of Scripture was preserved by superhuman means, would be shaken by the discovery that the purity was not absolute; but I wish to observe, that according to that view of the question which I am advocating, there ought to be no connexion between the stability of a Christian's faith and such a discovery; because the state of the text of the Bible, the manner in which the copies had been preserved, and all the accompanying circumstances, would be regarded as matters not to be determined upon speculative principles, but to be submitted to examination and inquiry. And if it be found, that the copies of the Scriptures are not free from errors of text and the like, then I conclude that the inspiration of them does *not* involve the preservation of writings in perfect purity; I might have fancied that it would, but I find as a matter of fact, that it does not. The investigation of the question may probably lead us to perceive, that the copies of the Scriptures have in reality been preserved with remarkable care; and there may be found, in the midst of trifling variations, a substantial purity, which we may attribute to the reverence with which the books were ever regarded, or to the good providence of God, according to the point of view from which we accustom ourselves to regard such matters; but whatever be the result, it will flow from observation of facts, and not from the definition of a term.

Again: it may be argued, that if the Holy Scriptures be inspired, they cannot contain anything contrary to science; that their contents must be true, and therefore in accordance with the truths which human investigation has discovered; and

The possibility of scientific errors in Scripture. See Note 27.

LECT.
VI.

some persons will say, that if there be a discrepancy human science must give way to inspiration. With regard to which last point, I will remark by the way, that persons holding such language prove that they do not know what science is, that they have not the preparation of mind necessary to enable them to estimate the meaning of scientific certainty ; for if they had, they would not speak of human science giving way to any source of information whatever, they would know that the accredited conclusions of science are of a nature to force assent from all those, whose education and powers of mind enable them to appreciate the evidence. Hence it is sheer folly to talk of influencing the conclusions of science ; she has an appointed, and a divinely appointed, path, in which no man is able successfully, and no wise man will attempt, to interfere with her. But there has been, as we know, from the days of Galileo downwards, a constant fear, lest the conclusions of science should contradict the statements of the Bible, and abundance of books have been written in order to prevent a collision : how far such books have been successful, it does not now concern me to inquire ; that which my present subject leads me to assert is this, that the question whether the physical statements of the Bible are scientifically accurate is not to be prejudicated by any assumed view of inspiration, but after due inquiry to be decided upon the evidence. Divine inspiration *may* imply an absence of errors upon physical questions, or it may not : who shall venture to say positively *à priori* whether it does, or no ? much general reasoning might probably be brought on either side,—but why

have recourse to general reasoning? is it clear that the question needs to be settled definitively at all? or if there be such a need, why not endeavour by looking to the evidence to see on which side the truth lies? and if it should appear upon examination, that the first chapter of Genesis, or any other chapter, contains statements not in accordance with science, then, instead of coming to the conclusion that the Scriptures are not inspired, I should rather come to this, namely, that the idea of inspiration does not involve that accuracy concerning physics, which many persons have imagined that it does. Observe, I am not now making any statement of opinion concerning the scientific character of the Bible, but am maintaining, that if it should prove that an adherence to scientific precision has not been one of the laws of its composition, we are not thereby compelled to say, that it cannot be the Word of God.

LECT.
VI.

A similar remark holds concerning the historical character of the Bible. Doubtless we have a right to expect historical accuracy, on the part of those who undertake to chronicle events, whether sacred or profane; and I should suppose, that no one in these days would venture to support the charge of wilful falsehood against the sacred writers; on the other hand, there are in the writers of the New Testament, with whom we are chiefly concerned, most patent marks of honesty and sincerity, which a person must be blind not to see; but whether in virtue of that quality, which we call inspiration, there be in the case of the writers of Scripture an absolute safety from error, whether by any superintending power they have been preserved

Possibility
of historical
errors.

See Note
28.

LECT.
VI.

from mistake as to matters of fact, is a point not to be assumed but to be investigated. It *may* be so, and there may be probable grounds for thinking that it is so; but to say that it *must* be so, in virtue of the imputed quality of inspiration, is to beg the whole question of what inspiration means. It is very easy to imagine a flippant style of criticism, which our reverence for a book regarded by us as the Word of God may render offensive to devout minds, and which may be injurious to those who practise it; but if the accuracy of the Scripture records be tested by sound methods of historical criticism, we should shew ourselves very faint-hearted believers if we trembled for the result; and if it should be shewn, beyond reasonable doubt, that the Scripture story is not free from those historical errors, which we discover in the most carefully written of human productions, then the only necessary conclusion is this, that inspiration does *not* involve that quality, which we might have been led to expect that it would.

Possibility
of internal
discrepan-
cies.

See Note
29.

And so once more, with regard to alleged contradictions between one part of Scripture and another; we might be disposed to deny on general religious grounds, the possibility of such contradictions; it might very plausibly be argued, that the Bible is all the utterance of the same God, and must be therefore ever consistent with itself; and so, no doubt, as to its great purposes and aims, it not only *must be*, but manifestly *is*; but whether this general unity and consistency necessitates an exact agreement in all subordinate statements of fact, and the like, is a question to be decided upon the evidence. And I think that the man, who is

most distant in feeling from a simplehearted Christian, will not wonder, that they who reverence the Scriptures as we reverence them, should be very jealous of allowing the existence of anything which might even seem to be a defect; and this jealousy has led to a careful examination of many alleged discrepancies, and the entire removal of some of them; and the investigations thereby necessitated have (I believe) frequently led to a more grounded conviction of the trustworthy character of the records. As to whether all alleged discrepancies have been cleared away, it is beyond the scope of my argument to hazard an opinion; I only desire to press the point, that the question of inspiration or non-inspiration does not depend upon the issue. If indeed it should appear, that among the multitude of independent writers, of places and times so widely different as those occupied by the sacred authors, there can be discovered no discrepancy of statement of the minutest kind, then the result is so marvellous, that it may very well be concluded that there was some special agency at work to bring it about; but if on the other hand it should appear, that there *are* discrepancies, admitted to be such by all competent judges, then why should we peril the character of the faith by an assertion that such things cannot be? and why not rather make the reply, the reasonableness of which I am endeavouring to impress, namely, that the result proves, that inspiration does *not* involve that minute infallibility, which we were disposed upon general grounds to imagine that it did?

And here let me be pardoned, if, in consideration of the delicate nature of the ground upon

Misunder-
standing
guarded
against.

LECT.
VI.

which I am treading, and the danger of giving offence to religious feelings, which I would desire on all accounts not to offend, I urge in general as to all the points now mentioned that which has already been said with regard to some of them, that I am not at this present time desiring to support an opinion as to the side upon which the truth lies, but only to protest against the character of our most holy faith being staked upon foregone conclusions as to what the Bible must or must not be. I desire to speak of its inspiration with reference to those great purposes and aims which manifestly belong to it, to recognise it as God's Word chiefly because it is a record of God's revelation to our race in Jesus Christ His Son, and then to leave it as a matter for reverent and cautious inquiry, what (as regards details) the nature and character of the book may be. And if it should prove different in many respects from our anticipations, we shall have studied the works of God in nature to little purpose, if we have not learned to hush rebellious thoughts, when we find that in revelation as in nature His ways are different from those which man would attribute to Him. We find in science a long record of things proving to be different from what men rashly imagined that they *must* be; yet, in all cases, the law which science has revealed has been far more simple and beautiful than that which men had imagined; we find also, that the progress of science has had the effect of producing a more thorough appreciation of the mysteries of the universe, and a deeper sense of the narrow limits of human knowledge; and we see also in the same progress the continual crushing of rash theories by

stern fact, and the continual proof that God is above them all. Then why may not the like be true in matters concerning religion? why not prepare ourselves for the result, that God's actual mode of revealing Himself to us has been wiser and better than we thought,—the true theory of the heavens simpler than the cycles and epicycles, which we had laboriously contrived? why give up our faith in Him, who seems to be the one Light of our darkness, because God may be found to have spoken to mankind according to other laws, than those anticipated by some amongst ourselves?

But I now proceed to remark, that although the best ground for contemplating the Bible as the inspired book of God, seems to me to be that which is afforded by the consideration that Jesus Christ is the great end of its revelations, I by no means desire to hold back the student of Scripture from further views of the nature of its inspiration, which may probably present themselves if he study God's word aright. Indeed it can hardly be doubted, but that if Jesus Christ be the light which shines from each page of the Bible, there will be mysteries hidden in that book as there are in Himself, which will make themselves known only to the humble and meek: and if the devout student of the Scriptures be led to take of them such views, as to a person looking on from a merely external standing-point seem to be enthusiastic and untenable, the latter will be guilty of rashness if he venture to condemn views, which he has not taken the right means to understand. It may be true in spiritual things, as in natural, that the light of Heaven has its invisible rays.

Views of
Inspira-
tion ex-
tended by
examina-
tion of the
Scriptures.

Colos. ii. 3.

LECT.
VI.

Examples
of this ex-
tension.

Let me adduce a few examples in illustration of the different impressions which will be produced upon the minds of different students, according to the point of view from which the Scriptures are contemplated ;—examples which will also help us to perceive, how that intimate and reverential study may possibly lead us to the adoption of views, which would not have recommended themselves to us on merely external grounds.

Form in
which the
Gospel
History
has been
preserved.
See Note
30.

Let us look, for a first instance, to the form in which the life of our Lord has been recorded. We have four histories, manifestly in a certain sense independent, and yet as manifestly connected : the coincidences between them and the discrepancies alike so remarkable, that I believe I am right in saying, that no theory has been yet devised, which has been generally accepted as affording a satisfactory account of the process, through which it came about, that the histories are such as they are. Looked upon from without, this condition of the evangelical history affords a curious literary problem, and perhaps nothing more ; but may not a devout Christian possibly recognise in it something of the operation of that Spirit, by whose direction the Evangelists wrote ? I do not suggest, that this is the way, in which we should have expected inspired documents to manifest their character ; but when we find, that out of all the attempts to portray the Saviour, four alone have by some means stood forth as genuine portraits, that these four recognised originals have yet some connection with each other which no one has been able hitherto to define, and that the fourfold structure of the history is so peculiar, that there is scarcely any objection to the truthful-

ness of the story which cannot be by the character of the Gospels refuted,—then may we not recognise here a very remarkable form of the Providence of God, watching over the record of His revelation to us in Jesus Christ? Imagine the Gospels to be other than they are,—more numerous or fewer,—more free from coincidences or less,—exhibiting more apparent discrepancies than the present or not so many,—and I believe that upon almost any hypothesis you will find, that the cord upon which the faith hangs would be weakened, and that the evangelical history would be laid more open to the attacks of the ingenious, than in its actual form it is found to be.

LECT.
VI.

Again: look at the question of prophecy. Here we have abundance of opportunity for cavils from those, who look upon the faith wholly from without. It may be maintained, that there really is no such thing as prophecy,—that the predictions of the old Jewish seers referred to the immediate prospects and fortunes of their own country, that even upon this view of them they were seldom fulfilled,—that the announcement of the fulfilment of prophecy in the New Testament (especially in S. Matthew's Gospel) can only be accounted for from a Jewish standing-point,—and the rest. Objections of this kind may be easily made; and I quite admit, that the bare notion of the fitting of prediction and fulfilment, as of lock and key, is by no means sufficient to afford a satisfactory basis for a complete theory of prophecy; nor do I question, that the visions of the old Jewish seers were in general directed to the condition of their own country,—they said, themselves, that such was the

Prophecy.
See Note
31.

LECT.
VI.

case, and I know not why we should disbelieve them,—and as to whether their prophecies were all fulfilled, that is a question which in the present day it is at least rash to decide in the negative ; but suppose, that setting aside particular considerations of this kind, we regard the Christian student as looking to this broad fact, that by some means it came to pass that the light of Christ did not burst upon the world in an altogether unexpected manner,—that when the Sun rose men were certainly looking towards the East,—that those old prophecies undeniably had had the effect of raising an expectation that God would visit His people,—and then you will not wonder, that in this great result he should be led to see the operation of God's Spirit ; you will not wonder that he should speak of those writings as inspired, which did thus prepare the world for the coming of Christ. A minute criticism of language will not break away such a broad ground as this : and further, it will be no occasion for surprise, if it should appear that a student of Scripture starting from this point should not stop here,—if, standing upon this broad ground, he should be led to perceive in a thousand little hints and words and phrases, foreshadowings of the kingdom of Christ, which might escape a sceptical inquirer ; even as a mere look may sometimes be full of meaning to hearts which are sure of each other, and yet may be quite unperceived by those who stand by.

The adaptation of the Scriptures to our spiritual wants.

Again : we are told by some who have studied the Scriptures, that they find in them an adaptation to their spiritual wants, which they find nowhere else, or only in such books as have been

drawn more or less from the Bible. To say on this ground that the book is inspired, would be to say that, which, to a person looking upon the question from without, would have no meaning and carry no weight; but yet, if a Christian student, who reverences the Scriptures as the revelation of Jesus Christ, should be led by his reading to perceive that they reveal to him something more, I do not know why we should lightly question his experience. Nay, if such a reader should be carried into some apparent extravagance in his estimate of the contents of the book which he prizes, and if he should put upon its every word and letter a value which can scarcely be expected to pass current in the world at large, though scientifically we may pronounce him wrong, yet there may possibly be more truth in his error than in our mode of correcting him. That woman of Samaria, who had the privilege of an interview with Christ, went back (as you will remember) to her own city, and declared that she had seen *a man who told her all things that ever she did*. Was this true, or was it not? In one sense it was not; and the men of Sychar, if disposed to criticise, might easily have proved the woman in error, and might have plausibly accused her of allowing religious feeling to run beyond the dictates of cool reason. And yet, was not her statement in the deepest sense *true*? She did but express in plain intelligible language the great truth which she felt in her inmost soul, that she had been with one, who could see into her heart, who knew what was in her, to whose eye her thoughts were bare: and if any of the Samaritans carped and criticised, she might probably

LECT.
VI.

See Note
32.

S. John iv
29.

LECT.
VI.

S. John iv.
42.

find a sufficient explanation of their conduct in this, that *they* had *not* been with Christ, and *she* *had*. You will remember also, that when the men of the city had themselves known Christ and entertained Him amongst them, then they also believed, *because* (as they said) *they had heard Him themselves, and known that He was indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world*. It would be endless to refer to all the features of the Bible which illustrate this point: but I will mention one. Think for a moment of the Psalms,—old Hebrew hymns you may call them, if you please,—yes truly, old Hebrew hymns,—some written by a shepherd-boy, who, as he watched his flock by night, meditated upon the heavens which declared to him the glory of God,—some by a young hero, who had avenged the insults offered to his country and to his God, and who had excited jealousy and persecution by his victory,—some by a king, who had forgotten himself in his prosperity, and who fell into deadly crimes, and, coming to himself again, by repentance poured out his heart in the most touching tones of sorrow,—some recording the mercies of God to Israel,—some lamenting with deepest pathos the sorrows of banishment from their own land,—hymns, in fact, written at divers times and under divers external influences, and yet speaking to the hearts of Christian men and women in these days as the fresh utterance of the voice of God, expressing for them what they think and feel better than they can express it themselves, revealing to them their own experience, *telling them all things that ever they did*, supplying them with meditations in times of sorrow, and words of thank-

fulness in times of joy,—think, I say, of these Psalms, which have been the constant vehicle of the worship of the Church in all ages, and which thousands of Christians from S. Augustine down to the patient in Addenbrooke's Hospital, including such men as Richard Hooker, have endorsed as the best expressions of their thoughts and wishes, and joys and sorrows; and then say, whether we have any right to wonder, that a person who studies and loves them should see in them in a marvellously true sense the work of the Holy Spirit of God.

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VI.

See Note
33.

And once more: I would say in general, that almost all those features of Scripture, which to an external critic may seem to afford good ground for attack upon its divine character, will probably appear in a very different light to him, who approaches the subject (if I may so speak) from within, who recognises the Scripture as God's word on the ground of its being the record of Christ, and studies it accordingly. The remarkable manner of its composition, the apparently fortuitous aggregation of elements so distinct in their origin and their dates, and the harmony which nevertheless pervades them, the providence which has watched over its preservation, its susceptibility of translation into all human languages, the vitality which is evidenced by its outliving all attacks, the strength of internal evidence with which it commends itself to the hearts of the simple,—these, and many other points which cannot be touched upon now, do so thoroughly difference the Bible from any other book, that we cannot wonder if very strong views of its inspiration should be taken by many

Other
features
suggestive
of a divine
influence.

LECT.
VI.

of those who study it devoutly, and who endeavour to act upon its precepts. Indeed, I cannot express too strongly my conviction, that views concerning Holy Scripture, which upon merely external grounds may not be capable of being supported, may, nevertheless, commend themselves to devout minds with a power of evidence which no external argument can shake : and while I would protest against particular theories of inspiration being regarded as tests of orthodoxy, and grieve over them when made the shibboleths of party, believing the true ground for speaking of the Bible as God's written word to be this, that it testifies of the living *Word* *who was made flesh*, I would equally deprecate any attempt to cut down the views of the work of the Spirit in the composition of the Scripture to such a standard as can be substantiated upon external grounds. They who have studied the Scriptures carefully, and have examined them with prayer, and have restrained their souls with discipline, and refreshed them with sacraments, and who have thus communed devoutly and earnestly with that Spirit by whose agency the Scriptures were composed, may have obtained an insight into the mysteries of God, which no criticism can give and no criticism can take away : they have laboured for their knowledge, and have a right to the reward which they have earned. Mary was more blessed than Martha,—Martha served Christ in outward things, but Mary sat at His feet and heard His words.

S. John i.
14.S. Luke x.
39.Conclu-
sion.

Hence, then, we are not to be surprised if we find, that persons, looking upon the question of the inspiration of Scripture from different points of

view, adopt different conclusions; nor even if we ourselves should be led by a devotional study of God's word, to regard it in a way, which might possibly have seemed upon external grounds unreal, and enthusiastic, and fanciful. One point only I will endeavour to impress upon you in conclusion, as suggested by the words of the text; and it is this, that the question of inspiration is chiefly important in its practical bearing upon the life of a Christian: *All Scripture*, says the Apostle, *is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable,—* for what? for controversy? for a shibboleth of party? for a test of heresy? for a fulcrum of attack upon the Catholic faith? No; but *for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.* In fact, the Scriptures have truly testified of Christ, when they have constrained Christians to copy the pattern of their Lord: and they have chiefly approved themselves to be inspired by the Holy Spirit, when they have made Christians holy, and brought forth the fruits of the Spirit in their lives.

Gal. v. 22.
Eph. v. 9.

LECTURE VII.

CHARACTER OF GOD IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

Preached on Sunday, October 7, 1855.

ROMANS IX. 4, 5.

*Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises;
Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.*

LECT.
VII.

IN resuming this course of Lectures, it will be desirable, in a few words, to call to mind the principle upon which they are founded, and the illustrations which have already been given of the application of that principle.

Reference
to the
plan of
these Lec-
tures.

It was proposed in the introductory Lecture to examine some of the doctrines and accompanying difficulties (for such there ever will be) of the Christian religion, from the standing-point afforded by the Catholic doctrine of the being of our Lord Jesus Christ. Regarding that doctrine as the centre of our faith—the highest point in the City of God—it seemed to me to be probable, that we should see from thence other doctrines in such mutually confirming harmony, as should be at once an evidence of their truth, and of the correctness of the point of view from which they

had been examined; and not only so, but that some of the difficulties, which may be raised concerning the faith, and which may be made to appear from some points of view formidable to a certain class of inquirers, would be reduced to their just proportions, if not put out of sight altogether. In proposing such a course, I took care to explain, that I by no means regarded it as the one only mode of considering the Christian religion, but that I desired to exhibit a view, which had been to my own mind one of singular comfort and support, in the hope that others might find in it the like satisfaction, when harassed by those intellectual trials of faith, from which no thoughtful man can hope always to be free. And this explanation I the rather lay stress upon, because I have reason to fear, that my purpose has been (to some extent at least) mistaken; as though I had abandoned some ground which the Church had occupied, and had not taken such a view of certain doctrines as would be warranted or required by the principles of the Church Catholic, or in particular by those of the Church of England. It should however be considered, that I neither depreciated nor interfered with other views which might be taken of the doctrines discussed, or of the grounds upon which they were to be held: but I reasoned thus,—the Church of Christ appears to be built upon the great doctrine, that God has become *manifest* to us *in the flesh*. This is a mystery, and Scripture ever represents it as a mystery; but still, on the one hand it does so entirely meet all the wishes and wants of our hearts, seems to be so thoroughly the medicine

LECT.
VII.

Special
reason for
this
reference.

1 Tim. iii.
16.

- LECT. VII. for our infirmity, so completely the counterpoise to the awful facts of sin and death, and on the other hand, from the stupendous character of the doctrine, seems so incapable of supporting itself upon any other foundation except essential truth, that it would appear to be a reasonable and useful course to take this doctrine as the great postulate of the faith, and then see in what light other doctrines stand. Accordingly we discussed the
- Lecture ii. doctrine of the Atonement, which was brought before us by Good Friday, and the history of the
- Lecture iii. Resurrection, which was brought before us by the Feast of Easter; then we directed our attention
- Lecture iv. to the Miracles of our Lord, as supplementary to the history of the great Gospel Miracle of the Resurrection; and, lastly, we considered the aspect of the Bible, as the inspired book of God, when regarded emphatically as the witness to the coming of Christ. Whether any light was thrown upon the doctrines discussed, or whether (as I hoped) any of the difficulties, which are forced upon the attention of young Christians by the speculations and criticisms of our day, were removed, or reduced in magnitude to the apprehension of any of those who listened to me, I have no desire to express an opinion, and no right to judge; but I *do* wish to lay stress upon the point, that my intention was not to substitute a new system for that upon which the Church of England builds the faith of her children, but simply to suggest a point of view, from which, if the facts and doctrines of the Christian religion be habitually contemplated, they will not (as I apprehend) be obnoxious to the objections, or easily assailable
- Lectures v. and vi.

by the weapons, of the opponents of the faith who belong to our time.

LECT.
VII.

And now, in pursuing the same line of argument, I propose to call attention to a subject, which very naturally connects itself with that last discussed, or which may perhaps be regarded as a branch of the same. The subject last discussed was the Inspiration of Holy Scripture; and as connected with the question so brought before us, we shall do well to direct our attention to the character of God, and the manner of His dealings, as they come before us in the Old Testament. It is an objection not unfrequently brought against the faith, and which sometimes tinges literature not directly concerned with theological questions, that the character attributed to God in the Old Testament is an unworthy character, and the alleged manner of His dealings an unworthy manner; and it is clear that such a charge requires consideration: it is a fact which we cannot pass by, even in justice to ourselves, that the picture of God, given to us in one volume of His Word, should be accounted by any number of persons as unworthy of the dignity of Him whom it purports to represent, as exhibiting features of which their reverence for God compels them to assert, that they cannot possibly be His. This charge, it will be observed, is far deeper and more fundamental than any depending upon the critical character of the books of Scripture; questions concerning the integrity of the text, the minute exactness of the details of the history, the un-deviating consistency of one writer with another, and the like, however important they may appear

Subject
of this
Lecture:
the charac-
ter of God
and the
manner of
His deal-
ings as ex-
hibited in
the Old
Testament.

LECT.
VII.

to some minds, are manifestly not worthy to be named in comparison with a question concerning the moral character of the Revelation itself, and the possibility of believing the Old Testament history to be the history of the acts and a picture of the character of Him, to whom alone belong all attributes of holiness and perfection.

This charge, then, which is often and very confidently brought against the Christian faith, requires consideration,—nay, will force itself upon the consideration of many; and much light will (as I imagine) be thrown upon the difficulties involved in it, when we regard the Old Testament, equally with the New, as emphatically

S. Matt. i.
1.

the book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham, or, in other words, as the history of the manifestation of God in the flesh.

Preliminary
observations.

But, before I discuss the question according to the special line of argument belonging to these Lectures, I wish to make one or two observations, which will help us in coming at the truth.

Charges
against the
Old Testa-
ment not
new.

In the first place, it will occur to many of us, that charges against the character of God, as exhibited in the Old Testament, are by no means new in the history of the Church. Indeed, it would perhaps be hard to find any error or heresy, which modern times can claim as truly and distinctively their own; and certainly, as concerning the question now before us, it had attained its full growth and development in the early centuries. The Manichæans probably left little to be said by their successors in the way of objection to the Old Testament; and, in fact, when we find the

historian of that sect speaking of the author of the heresy as "having ventured to reject the Old Testament altogether, and to reform the New," we might almost fancy that he was describing the views of some in our own days, who have thought to find the truth by the same process. Of course it may be argued, that the antiquity of objections to the faith is a ground for holding their validity; but it will perhaps be thought a sounder view of the matter, to consider that objections, which have been often raised, and often combated, and which have not been able to destroy the faith, or even sensibly weaken its hold upon men's hearts, are not so deep as they seem, not so conclusive as their supporters imagine and represent them to be.

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VII.

See Note
34.

Let it however be remarked, that to deny the validity of an objection is not the same thing as to deny the existence of the difficulty, which is probably at the root of the objection. We may often feel ourselves justified in denying, that an alleged objection is fatal to the claims of that which purports to be revealed truth, while we should be unreasonable in asserting, that the truth as revealed presented no difficulty, was in no degree or sense opposed to notions which we might have been led on independent grounds to form: and because I believe this remark to be peculiarly applicable in the present case,—that is to say, that there is a difficulty, which will in all ages of the Church make itself felt in one form or another, but no valid objection, which can in any age of the Church be substantiated, therefore I will make this observation, the value of which all

A caution
founded
upon the
principles
of Butler's
Analogy.

LECT.
VII.

See Note
35.

students of Butler's *Analogy* will admit, namely, that we have no right to demand a complete reconciliation of the character and dealings of God as exhibited in the Old Testament with the idea of God supplied by the reason, until we have fully reconciled with that idea all that we know of the character and dealings of the same God from observation of the world in which we live. Of course, to demonstrate a contrariety, and not to be able to exhibit a reconciliation, are two very different things; and if it could be shewn that any alleged history of divine doings was contrary to the view which reason gives of the divine perfections, I would not be the man to lower those perfections in order to adapt them to a history; but if we find that a history merely exhibits the same difficulties, and the same anomalies, which are presented by the experience of every day, then it is clear that we ought to be at least very cautious in the conclusions to which we come, concerning the compatibility of the truth of that history with the character and perfections of God. God is holy, just, and merciful; who shall deny these great truths, which reason infallibly teaches us? Yet these truths we hold, not because all experience confirms them, but rather in the face of ten thousand apparently opposing facts, which we rightly judge that we should be able to perceive to be in perfect harmony, if only we knew the whole; and this being the way, in which we are compelled to guard against being robbed by experience of the most precious truths we hold, it manifestly requires much consideration, before we permit any difficulties of a book, professing to be

from God, to drive us to the conclusion that it cannot be His book indeed.

LECT.
VII.

Bearing this caution in mind then, allow me to offer two or three remarks concerning the general character of the Old Testament, which may serve to obviate a certain class of difficulties, and introduce that particular view of the subject which more especially belongs to these Lectures.

Remarks
on the
general
character
of the Old
Testament.

See Note
36.

(1) In the first place, let it never be forgotten, that the Old Testament constantly represents God as the one sole author and ruler of all things. To say that the religion of the Jews was monotheistic, though the statement is a true one, does yet not convey to the mind (I think) a due notion of the infinite gulf between the religion of the Old Testament and the polytheisms of heathendom. The revelation of God to Moses, and through him to the children of Israel, as the I AM, is in fact the revelation of the *one* LORD which pervades the whole book; it was no new revelation, it never professed to be such, it was emphatically *the God of their fathers*, who had revealed Himself long before, and now, in His mercy, revealed Himself again. Indeed, it is a revelation of the one God with which the book opens; *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth*; and it was He who made man and breathed into him His own breath, who gave him a law to keep, and punished him when he broke it; and whether truly or not, whether consistently or not, the book purports to relate to us the dealings of this one God who created the heaven and the earth with man His rebellious creature. Thus, in the Old Testament, God is *one*, not as being merely numerically

The *unity*
of God as
revealed in
the Old
Testament.

Exodus iii.
14.
Deut. vi. 4.

Exodus iii.
13, 15.

Gen. i. 1.

LECT.
VII.See Note
37.Rom. iii.
29.The right-
eousness of
God as re-
vealed in
the Old
Testament.

the only Being of infinite power, but as the self-existing, unchangeable Lord of all, and ground of all: and the dealings of God as represented in Scripture stand out consequently in a contrast with heathen mythologies, which Strauss himself has noticed; for whereas such mythologies deal with the history of the gods, the Old Testament assumes throughout that God can have no history, being ever and unchangeably the same, and accordingly is occupied only with the history of men, and the change of their relations with reference to Him who changeth not. And although so much of Scripture is occupied with the deeds of Him, who is called *the God of Israel*, yet it is ever implied that such a title belongs to Him, not as the God of that nation only, but as the God of all nations, who for wise purposes had revealed Himself to Israel in a clearer and more personal manner, than to the Gentile world at large.

(2) Again: it is to be noticed, that it is manifestly one main design to represent the character of God in precisely that light, in which it is thought by some that the Old Testament character of God is faulty, namely, as a just and righteous God. It would be begging the question to assert, that every action spoken of as an act of divine performance can be reconciled to the idea of justice; but certainly we cannot be wrong in saying, that the book bears the strongest marks possible of a design to exhibit this character more prominently than almost any other; certainly it is quite as prominent as that of power, or that of lovingkindness. Thus on the earliest page of man's moral history we have the picture of God sitting in judgment

upon his transgression, and pronouncing a sentence so tempered with mercy, yet so severe, as to force upon us the conviction, that the eternal laws of right forbade the passing over of the act of sin. The very next chapter represents man as a murderer, God again as a Judge. Then, again, in the history of the Flood, we have the same lesson on a large scale, the punishment of the wicked, the preservation of the righteous. The same thing stands out as the moral of the overthrow of the cities of the plain; in connection with which it is to be remarked, how completely the belief in the righteousness of God as the Judge of all the earth had worked itself into the mind of Abraham: *shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?*—those were his words when he pleaded for the devoted cities. So likewise the righteousness of God was one of the great lessons, which purported to be taught to the Israelites by all God's dealings with them,—a lesson to be taught by the rejection of themselves, by the desertion of His sanctuary, the destruction of His own temple, if it could be impressed in no other way; and you will remember, how, when in their captivity they questioned the righteousness of God, and spoke of the fathers eating sour grapes and the children's teeth being set on edge, the prophet Ezekiel republished with tremendous emphasis the great law by which that righteousness was vindicated, namely, that *the soul which sinneth, it shall die*. These examples will be sufficient to suggest the truth, that throughout the entire Old Testament there is a uniform witness, whether adequate or not, to the righteousness of God; *His righteousness ever stands* out upon the ground of the history

Gen. xviii.
25.Ezekiel
xviii. 4.

LECT.
VII.Psalm
xxxvi. 6.

as the strong mountains, however it may be also true that some of *His judgments are like the great deep*; and when the righteousness of the character of God, as it appears in the Old Testament, is questioned, it is certainly not without advantage to observe, how striking is the effort (so to speak) which is made, to bring out in the strongest manner possible this very side of the divine perfection. We may not be able to explain every action of which the Scripture gives us notice—that is a totally different question—but we shall be, or at least we ought to be, very slow in allowing the impression, made upon our minds by the broad lights of the picture of God's righteousness, to be confused by the small shadows thrown by particular facts, the character of which we are unable to explain, especially if those facts be nearly analogous to the dealings of God's Providence in the ordinary course of human affairs.

The com-
mand to
love God
in the Old
Testament.

(3) There is one other feature in the Old Testament representation of God to which I desire to call attention, especially in connection with the revelation of His righteousness, of which I have been just now speaking. It is the feature conveyed to our minds by the command to *love God*—that first and great commandment according to our blessed Lord: *Hear, O Israel, said Moses, the Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.* The Israelite had strong personal grounds for loving the God who had redeemed him from the house of bondage; still when we consider the terrors of Sinai, the strictness of the law, the weight of the penalties

Deut. vi.
4, 5.

for transgressing it, we may fancy perhaps that the command to *fear* would be found more easy to obey than the command to *love*; and so possibly it might be; but I wish to observe, that anyhow the command to love is quite as distinct as the command to fear, that the duty is made to flow at once as a corollary from the great truth of the unity of God, and that the command to love is worthy of notice, not only as a witness that the righteous God desired to be loved, but as being of a complexion so utterly distinct from any relation which can be conceived to exist between a human being and an idol. A man may fear an idol, or he may hate it, or he may despise it, but I am at a loss to conceive how he can love it; nor do I know of any command, which more testifies to the truth of the revelation of God in the Old Testament, or which more clearly shadows forth the better things of the New, than this unqualified command to love God with all the heart. Possibly it might sometimes appear to an Israelite a command hard to fulfil; certainly the full scope of the command, and the manner in which the keeping of it lies at the root of the whole spiritual life, could never be thoroughly understood, until Christ had called forth all the deepest feelings of the human heart by the mystery of His self-sacrificing and redeeming love.

LECT.
VII.

Such features as these seem to be proper points upon which to fix attention, when considering the character of God, as it appears in the Old Testament: and it will probably be found, that a mind accustomed to dwell upon these general and large views will not be easily alarmed by the exhibition

1 S. John
iv. 9, 10,
19.

Christ the
true key
to the Old
Testament.

LECT.
VII.

of difficulties, depending upon the interpretation given to certain particular facts. Nevertheless, I by no means desire to represent this as the only mode of dealing with the subject; on the other hand, my purpose is, to point out, that, whatever be the advantage gained from taking large views of the teaching of the Old Testament, the true key to its difficulties is then only completely in our hands when we regard it as the preface to the life of Christ; and that although there may still be points which we cannot explain, yet the problem is indefinitely simplified to him, who regards all other revelations of God in their connection with His great revelation of Himself in the person of the Incarnate Son.

See Note
38.

The Old Testament the history of the family of Abraham, because of that family Christ came.

Let us observe then, that the true starting-point of Old Testament history is the call of Abraham. Up to that point the book contains a certain number of detached pictures—the creation, the fall, the flood, the confusion of tongues—pictures no doubt of deepest human interest, and necessary as an introduction to what follows, yet still forming no complete history: but from the call of Abraham the book may be rightly described as that of the memorials of the patriarch's family—a family worthy of being made the subject of such a record, because it was to number amongst its members the Lord Jesus Christ. The true theory of the Old Testament is in fact given by St Paul in that passage which I have taken as a text for this sermon: he therein speaks of the Israelites as those, *to whom pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the*

Rom. ix.
4, 5.

fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever:—yes, Christ came; here is the great fact, which makes the history of Abraham's family not a mere family history, but the history of a seed in which the whole world should be blessed; this is why the history has not lost its interest, now that the family of Abraham has become like the sand on the sea-shore, not in the blessing of multitude, but in the curse of scattered incoherence and division; this is why the history has outlived the family, and has become far more generally read and known since the fall and dispersion of those, who might have seemed to be the persons chiefly interested in its records. Yes—Christ came of the seed of Abraham, and therefore the history of that seed has been the divine gift to mankind, the first volume of the book of God's covenant.

LECT.
VII.Gen. xxii.
17.

Now there is undeniably something very remarkable, in the fact of the annals of a family having assumed such a prominent position in the literature and religious teaching of the world: and the fact becomes more remarkable, when we observe that there is no effort on the part of the Scriptures to exaggerate the importance of Abraham himself. All his importance is attributed to the fact of God having called him, having revealed Himself to him, having made him the depository of certain promises. He is not even represented as being at the head of the civilisation of his age; Egypt is already a great city, having its king and its institutions, while Abraham is a wandering herdsman. But he is represented as receiving promises in trust for the world, and therefore is made the

Remark-
able
features
in Old
Testament
history.

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VII.

origin of the world's spiritual history. And in connection with this peculiarity in the choice of a subject for the sacred books, it may be well to remark also, how different is the tone of the narrative from that of ordinary ancient history; how little there is in it of what is sometimes called *Hero-worship*; how thoroughly human are the personages introduced, and how little care is taken to hide the faults and failings of the best and most notable amongst them. This of course is no new remark; if it had not been made by devout students, it would not have escaped the attention of scoffers, with whom it has often been an easy and pleasant exercise for their wit to display the weaknesses and sins of some whom Scripture describes as men of God; but I allude to the matter here, because the tone of Scripture to which I have referred is a good indication of its aim and meaning: if the men whose lives are recorded are represented as not differing from their brethren, liable to the same weaknesses, evidently of the same flesh and blood, then it may well be concluded that to exhibit those men as spotless examples was not the intention of Scripture; their lives may well be believed to have been recorded as they have been, simply because such their lives were; the history to be such as it is, simply because it is true; and if Abraham was guilty of deception, and Isaac of the same, and Jacob obtained his father's blessing by an unworthy trick, and the like, then these things were so recorded because so they were. And it is obvious to remark by the way, that they who blame the sacred documents should

consider, how easy it would have been to have hidden all defects, seeing that it is only through the writers, who have honestly disclosed them, that we have any knowledge of the history at all. But what I chiefly wish to observe is, that by all this we are driven upon the question, Why was this particular thread of history chosen as the basis of the Old Testament? The thing to be asked is, not why Abraham or Isaac or Jacob or David or Solomon did this or that, not whether their lives were pure, according to the Gospel standard of purity, but, supposing the biography of the Old Testament to be honest and true, Why was that biography made the subject of a book claiming to have a deep interest for the whole family of man? This is the real question to be asked concerning the construction of the Old Testament; and the answer is, that from these men *according to the flesh Christ came*, and because He came from them and He is *the light of the world*, therefore they are the true morning stars, at whose rising the sons of God may shout for joy. Job xxxviii. 7.

It is important also for my present purpose, to notice the manner in which the Old Testament comes to a close. It follows the ups and downs of the chosen family, the family of which Christ was to be a member, until it brings them back from their school of captivity and leaves them once more in Canaan; but leaves them wrapped up in prophecy, their hopes still in the future as for a long time they had been, and the last utterance of the book of the Old Covenant is that, which speaks of *the Lord whom the faithful* Close of the Old Testament remarkable. Mal. iii. 1.

LECT.
VII.

seek, suddenly coming to His Temple. The end of the chosen family then has not yet arrived, the promises have not yet been fulfilled, the nations of the world have not yet been blessed in Abraham's seed; but the promises are as distinct as ever, and we, who have the Old and New Testament by God's mercy joined together, can understand what was meant by those promises, and by the dark cloud of prophecy in which the chosen people disappear from our view; we can understand it, because we can look at the first verse of S. Matthew's Gospel, and there read of *the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham.*

How does
this bear
upon the
question of
the Old
Testament
character
of God?

But it may be said, how does all this bear upon the question of the character of God as given in the Old Testament? If that character be really unworthy of Him *in whom we live and move and have our being*, how does it help us to say, that the Old Testament is a history of the family of Abraham; and that it is so, because of the family of Abraham Christ came? It helps us thus: it turns our eyes to the one great revelation of God in human flesh, and teaches us to put the previous revelation in proper subordination to that; it reminds us, that a dispensation may be really divine, and yet may not have in it that *grace and truth* which are declared by S. John to have *come by Jesus Christ*. For, supposing that we find in the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ all that our spirits can desire, supposing that the revelation of God in human flesh appear to us to be in reality the only revelation of the invisible God which is possible for

S. John i.
17.

our faculties or adequate to our wants, or supposing that the incomprehensible evil introduced into the world by transgression required for its relief the incarnation of the Eternal Son, then the questions to be answered by the sacred books are such as these:—How was this revelation made? What is its history in time? How or by what external facts were God's purposes developed? And to questions such as these the Old Testament returns answers; it purports to give a preface to the New, a preface to the life and history of Christ: and the valid objection to it would be, to shew that it is not a true preface, that this was not the way in which according to the flesh Christ came; any such objection well sustained would of course deprive the Old Testament of its chief value, and any disproof of the reality of the mission and work of Christ would as certainly render it superfluous; but, supposing a person to be a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, I wish to press this point, that the kind of difficulty urged against the Old Testament need not trouble him, because, from the standing-ground of the Christian faith, such difficulties may be seen to belong to that class, of which it is only necessary to say, that at present we are not in a condition fully to explain them. For it will be found, that questions concerning the morality of the Old Testament, the character of God as revealed in it, and the mode of His dealings,—those questions at least, which can be made formidable upon these subjects,—do ultimately resolve themselves into this: In what manner was it best, or was it possible, for Almighty God to

LECT.
VII.

make known to mankind His love to them in Jesus Christ? The most orthodox believer does not deny—he would be a heretic if he did not firmly hold—that the revelation of the attributes of God in the person of Christ is far more complete than the revelation to Israel in olden days; that the whole atmosphere of the Christian Church is purer and milder and better, than that of the Tabernacle or the Temple; and therefore you may say, in a certain sense, that the morality of the New Testament is higher than that of the Old, and the character of God as exhibited in the Old different from that in the New, and different from that supplied by human reason; but then to found any charge against the Old Testament upon these admitted truths, is to beg the question of the possibility of exhibiting to mankind the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ by some other method than that, of which the Scriptures give us information; and so, an impeachment of the character of the Old Testament does in fact become an impeachment of the manner, in which God has caused His light to shine upon the world, the light itself (be it observed) being admitted all the while to be *very good*.

The
question
answered
by regard-
ing the
Bible as
the witness
to Christ.

And thus I think it will become more and more clear to those who dwell upon the subject, that as questions concerning the inspiration of Scripture can be answered in the most satisfactory manner by regarding the Bible as the witness to Christ, so also questions concerning the morality of the Old Testament and the picture which it gives us of the character and dealings of God can

be answered best in the same way. It is easy to put the Old Testament in a position which it is not intended to occupy, to forget that we are living under the light of Christ, to do in fact that against which S. Paul would have protested with all his soul, namely, bring us again *under bondage to weak and beggarly elements from which Christ has set us free*; and this mode of dealing with the Old Testament may sometimes perhaps have given advantage to those, who would make it the basis of operations in an attack upon the New; but I am convinced, that to any one who takes his stand upon the faith of Christ, as *God manifest in the flesh*, and who regards all utterances of God's Spirit as subordinate to the message brought to us by the incarnate Son, all difficulties raised upon the Old Testament will be perceived to belong to that extensive and perhaps infinite class, which depend for their apparent force upon our own inherent weakness.

In concluding my Lecture at this point, as my limits compel me to do, I am sensible that I may appear to have acted too much on the defensive, and to have done little justice to the fulness and sufficiency of Holy Scripture. This defect however is not so important as it may seem, just because Holy Scripture has this fulness and sufficiency; he who studies it, with Christ as his light, will not need to be informed what treasures there are in its pages; and on the other hand, I believe that a man may sometimes be perplexed by the *oppositions of science falsely so called*, by the cavils and objections of ingenious man, because he does not sufficiently bear in

LECT.
VII.Gal. iv. 9;
v. 1.Conclu-
sion.1 Tim. vi.
20.

LECT.
VII.

Acts viii.

S. John i.
45.

mind that *Christ is the end of the Law*. A man may read the Scriptures of the Old Testament in these days, like that Ethiopian Eunuch of whom we are told in the Acts of the Apostles, and like him may find himself in a desert and have no good answer to give to the question *Understandest thou what thou readest?* but when Jesus Christ is seen to be *He of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write*, then difficulties vanish, the desert blossoms as the rose, and strong in the faith of Christ the man may *go on his way rejoicing*.

LECTURE VIII.

THE DEALINGS OF GOD WITH THE HEATHEN WORLD.

Preached on Sunday, October 14, 1855.

S. JOHN V. 26, 27, 28.

*For as the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given
to the Son to have life in Himself;
And hath given Him authority to execute judgment also,
because He is the Son of Man.
Marvel not at this.*

—*HATH given Him authority to execute judgment,
because He is the Son of Man*—these words, not-
withstanding the caution not to marvel, can
scarcely fail to strike a reader of the Gospels as
containing a view of our Lord's prerogatives at
first sight strange. For, when declaring the high
office which had been committed to His hands
by the Father,—an office no less than that of
pronouncing judgment upon the whole human
race,—it might perhaps have been expected, that
our Lord would have referred the ground of the
commission to the fact of His coeternity and
coequality with the Father, rather than to the op-
posite fact of His humanity and humiliation. And
any one, who should be led upon this considera-
tion to question the correctness of the speech
attributed to Christ by our English version, or

LECT.
VIII.

Apparent
difficulty
in the text.

LECT.
VIII.

S. Chrysos-
tom's
interpreta-
tion.
See Note
39.

by the Greek original as usually construed, would be able to quote some great authorities on his side. S. Chrysostom, for example, expresses himself very plainly and strongly, saying, that to take the language in the sense which our English version assigns to it is to make our Lord's reasoning inconsequent, for that He did not receive the office of Judge *because* He was man, (since in that case there would be nothing to hinder other men also from being judges,) but because He is the Son of the ineffable Being,—that is, of God. To explain the apparent difficulty therefore, Chrysostom would connect the first clause of the 28th verse with the last clause of the preceding, and make the language run thus:—*That He is the Son of Man, marvel not at this;* as though the allusion to His humility were introduced by our Lord, as that which needed explanation and apology, rather than as that, which, according to the English version, is the ground and justification of His commission to be the Judge of mankind.

Another
method of
interpreta-
tion.

Other interpreters, to whom this mode of dealing with the passage has probably appeared hard and forced, but who nevertheless may have felt something of the difficulty urged by S. Chrysostom, have availed themselves of the fact that the title *Son of Man* is in Scripture a well-known synonyme for *the Messiah*, and have therefore considered that the assertion of Christ in the text is equivalent to this, that *because* He is the Messiah, therefore He is also the Judge: concerning which mode of treatment it will be only necessary to observe, that although upon

examination it does not appear to give a view of the passage essentially distinct from that given by our English version, yet certainly it does not in so pointed a manner attribute the judicial character of Christ to the fact of His stooping to our infirmities.

LECT.
VIII.

Perhaps however we shall gain the deepest insight into the words of Him, who spake as never man spake, and in whose language therefore there may probably be sometimes depths where there seem to be only difficulties, if we take His assertion that He has received from the Father authority to execute judgment *because He is the Son of Man*, in that plain obvious sense, which S. Chrysostom rejected as an insufficient exposition of our Saviour's words. In doing so we shall have a ground deeper than that, upon which the words *Son of Man* are regarded as merely synonymous with *Messiah*; for our ground will be that upon which the possibility of Messiahship rests: and we may perhaps venture to say, that Christ is *Messiah* as also He is Judge, for the same one great mysterious reason alleged by Himself in the text, namely, *because He is the Son of Man*; that is to say, it is the fact of the incarnation of the Eternal Son, the essential ineffable union thereby effected between the human race and Himself, which at once qualified Him to be the Saviour of mankind, and also has made it necessary and fitting that He should be their Judge as well. Of course it would have been impossible for us to have asserted *à priori*, what would be the conditions necessary for the redemption of our race; we might have fancied

The plain
meaning
the best.

LECT.
VIII.Phil. ii.
6—11.

that the higher the position of the Mediator and Advocate, so much the more effectual His mediation and advocacy; and this indeed in a certain sense is true; but forasmuch as we know that the stooping to our infirmities, the emptying Himself of His glory, and humbling Himself to death, even the death of the cross, were in the wisdom of God the necessary conditions of human redemption, and the ground of His title to the character of Saviour, so also it is not hard to believe, that those same acts of self-humiliation may have been no less essential to all other parts of the divine relation, in which He stands to mankind: it is not hard to believe, that as Christ, though the Son of God, could not have redeemed the world otherwise than by becoming the Son of Man, so it may be equally true, that Christ could not have become the Judge of the world upon any other condition than this same assumption of humanity.

The view
of Christ
given in
the text a
light in
certain dif-
ficulties.

Now it seems to me, that, if we regard our blessed Lord as asserting in the text a relationship to the whole family of mankind as their Judge, at whose voice the graves must open and the dead come forth to a resurrection of life or a resurrection of damnation, according as their deeds in the body have been good or evil, and as asserting this deep and universal relationship upon the ground of His having Himself become the Son of Man, we shall be able to obtain some light upon a difficulty, which attaches to certain modes of viewing the Christian dispensation, and which in our own days is not unlikely to come into prominence. The difficulty is that, which is

presented to the mind by the consideration of the relation in which the kingdom of Christ stands to the rest of the world, by the contemplation of the life and death of our Saviour and their results in relation to the remainder of God's government, His general economy, His providential direction of human affairs;—a difficulty, which is perhaps exaggerated into something more than a difficulty, when it is concluded that the sole design and effect of the Incarnation is the salvation of a few chosen persons; and which, on the other hand, is (as I believe) one which we may easily be content to regard as necessarily incident to creatures situated and constituted as we ourselves are, when we look upon the being and work of Christ in the light thrown upon them by such words as those of the text. Christ, in the fulness of His godhead, as *having life in Himself even as the Father has life in Himself*, and yet in virtue of His manhood having acquired power over the whole human race,—Christ, in fact, in the two-fold character asserted by and for Himself in the text, and proclaimed as the basis of all true faith by the Creeds of the Catholic Church,—Christ, thus declared, is the great Light of the world, and if in His light difficulties do not altogether vanish, they at least cease to be difficulties of practice, and may be generally referred to a class, which ought not to trouble those, by whom the imperfection of human faculties and the infinite mysteries of the ordinary course of God's government are admitted and appreciated facts.

The subject which I have thus indicated, is manifestly one of very wide extent; but, if we

S. John v.
26.

The subject
contracted
to two
points.

LECT.
VIII.

regard the Christian dispensation as it exhibits itself historically, or as a part of the general history of the world, there are two points which may perhaps especially occur to our minds as possible roots of difficulties; and upon these two I propose to concentrate attention in the present Lecture.

The relation of Christ as the Light of the world to other lights.

S. John i.
9.

I. The first point may be stated thus:—We speak of Christ our Lord as the Light of the world; we have the authority of Scripture for so describing Him: as His faithful servants we rightly deem, that it is impossible to exaggerate the fulness of meaning which belongs to such passages, as that which speaks of Him as *the true light which lighteth every man who cometh into the world*, and the like; and we naturally and justly expect to find, that the character of Christ given in Scripture has been borne out by experience and history; we expect to find, that, having been called the Light of the world, He has not been merely a Light to some few persons in the world, but that the illumination of the world may be properly spoken of as due to Him. If, for illustration's sake, the whole world had been at the coming of Christ in the condition of the African tribes, and the people who so sat in darkness had been humanized and civilised by the Gospel which He brought from Heaven, then we should clearly recognise in the working of such a Gospel that which would justify us in applying to the bearer of it the title—*The Light of the world*: of course we believe—indeed it is very difficult for any one to deny—that the Gospel has much of this humanizing and civilising power: certainly we

ourselves, as the descendants of wild tribes, who have been raised through God's mercy and providence to the forefront of the human family, may well acknowledge the illuminating power of the Gospel, and confess that, whatever He may have been to others, Christ has been indeed a light to us; and if He has been a light to us, there need not be, and probably there will not be, any practical difficulty to him, who is willing in simplicity of heart to follow the light when he sees it. But still it may easily come to pass, that the conclusions, drawn from an inspection of the actual history and economy of the world, should somewhat jar and clash with theories, formed from the glowing views of the illuminating power of Christ's Advent, to which the expressions of Scripture might naturally lead. For, when we examine the history of the world, we cannot but perceive, that much of what is really great and admirable in it has been, in the good providence of God, due to other sources, besides that peculiar fountain of illumination which we recognise in the coming of Christ; we may attempt, if we please, in the spirit of the Puritans, to ostracise all that we cannot trace to the Holy Scriptures, but we shall assuredly find by the result that we have woefully mistaken God's dealings, and shall discover that the conscience of mankind is against us; and we shall be forced in candour to admit, that if the education of the human race to the highest point of education, of which it is susceptible, be rightly accounted one great end of God's moral government, and if the process by which that education is effected be rightly described as the illumination of the world,

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VIII.

then certainly God has adopted other means of illumination, besides that which has been supplied by the publication of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Two principal examples of illumination independent of the Gospel: Greece and Rome.

There are two examples of this kind of illumination, which are perhaps the principal, and certainly those to which, in a place like this, attention may be most profitably directed.

I speak of the examples afforded by the influence produced upon the world by Greece and Rome. There are other nations whose thoughts and deeds have had a very weighty effect upon the condition of mankind at large; and there have been individual men, neither Greek nor Roman, who have been genuine lights to their own and subsequent ages; but we may refer in a peculiar manner to the influence of Greece and Rome, and of the great men of those two nations, not only because their influence has exceeded that of any other people, but because their history and literature continue to receive from us an amount of study, which as Christians we ought not to concede, unless we can honestly justify it upon grounds such as Christ Himself will approve. It is not necessary to do more than hint, in passing, at the kind of influence, which has been produced by the history and literature of Greece: I might speak of her poets having been the fathers of modern poetry, her historians the models of history, her philosophers the chief lights of philosophy, her fine sense of beauty the undying standard of the beautiful; but, taking all this for granted, I wish to lay stress upon the point, that the work, which God has done for the world by agency of this kind, is to be ever regarded as that, which is not

to be looked down upon with contempt from the high ground upon which the Church of Christ stands, but rather to be regarded as a definite part of the scheme of operations whereby the great purposes of God are being carried out. Nor have we any right to forget the great and direct influence, which has been exercised upon Christian thinkers and writers by Plato and Aristotle, and the close connection between the revival of ancient learning and the revival of religion after the twilight of the dark ages. So also with regard to Rome; though less indebted to her for assistance in the higher regions of thought, still we cannot fail to perceive, in the impress made by the character of the imperial nation upon the world, in the communication to others of those ideas of law and right, which in so peculiar a manner belonged to herself, and which survived and bore fruit in other nations after they had been smothered in her by luxury and vice, important means of bringing about that civilisation of the world, which we are justified in regarding as part of the divine illumination that comes from the source of all light. What then are we to do with such cases as these? how are we to bring them into connection with the Christian revelation? are we to depreciate the wholesome influences, which have been shed upon mankind from other springs of God's bounty, in order to exalt by comparison the light which shone upon the earth from the face of Jesus Christ? and how can we reconcile the importance, which we do practically attach (in education, for instance) to the influences derived from Heathen sources, with our professed belief in Him as the Light of the world?

How to
connect
these with
the Chris-
tian reve-
lation?

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Christian-
ity some-
times re-
garded as
one form of
a universal
religion.

I press this view of what may seem a difficulty, the rather because it brings us in sight of that notion, which in these days finds considerable favour, and which, not denying altogether the truth and value of Christianity, regards it as one form of religion out of many, and grants it a place as a useful influence in the world, in conjunction with others differing from it in degree only, and not in kind. Now the very point, for which, as Christians, we are bound to contend, is, that the revelation of God in Jesus Christ *does* stand altogether by itself,—the knowledge so derived distinct from all other knowledge: but in contending for this point we may easily seem to run into an inconsistency. I think, for example, that we cannot get free from a charge of inconsistency, in representing the Holy Scriptures as our only light, and at the same time devoting a large portion of our time to the study of the thoughts of Heathen, upon the plea of a sharp line drawn between religious and secular teaching, as though we read the Bible for one purpose, and all other books for another; for all teaching, which tends to form a high character, to bring out of a man what is noble in him, to lead him to manly and exalted thought, is in its very nature religious: and it seems to me, that by the place which we assign to what is called profane learning, we do practically admit that God has made use of other influences, besides that of the direct preaching of the Gospel, for the purpose of regenerating mankind. Why should we not admit this? are we sure that the Church of Christ could have existed, if a certain preparatory work had not been done, which according to

God's providence was done by Heathen nations? is it not, in fact, implied by the expression, *the fulness of time*, that there was a work to be accomplished, preparatory to the sending forth of the Son of God,—a work not necessarily limited to the Jewish nation? But indeed the truth seems to be this, that the whole difficulty, presented by the fact of the world being largely indebted for spiritual benefits to Heathen influences, arises from an imperfect perception of our Lord's relation to the human race: He, who could use such words as those of the text, needs no depreciation of the softening, ennobling, enlightening influences, which have at sundry times and in divers manners blessed the world, in order to exalt ~~His~~ name: He who could declare, that in virtue of His humanity He had received authority to judge the world, and who thus claims the nearest bonds of connection with the whole human race, may very well be a light to the world in a much wider sense, than would appear from any computation of the visible effects produced by the preaching of the Gospel hitherto.

I trust that in thus speaking, I shall not appear unduly to exaggerate the benefits received by mankind independently of the Church, nor to depreciate the greatness of the light which fell from the cross of Christ upon the nations who at the very best walked in great darkness before. So far as we Christians are personally concerned, the calling of His Church, the indwelling in that Church by His Spirit, and the feeding of the Church by His Word and Sacraments, are the results of our Lord's mission, upon which alone our minds

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Gal. iv. 4.

To acknowledge the benefits received from other sources is not to depreciate the Christian Church.

LECT.
VIII.S. John ix.
25.

need dwell ; the answer of the blind man, who had received his sight from Christ, to those who desired to underrate the character of his Saviour, may very well serve our turn—*One thing we know, that whereas we were blind, now we see*; but when the thought comes before our minds, either in our own musings or by the suggestion of others, that the relation of Christ to the world is not such as belongs to the idea of a Saviour, as exhibited by Scripture, and recognised as a worthy idea by our own hearts, then it is necessary to remember, that the relations of Christ to the human race are much wider and deeper than those, which come before us in contemplating His relations to the Church. The union with Himself, granted to believers in Him, is no doubt the nearest and closest communion with God granted to man; but Christ, *because He is the Son of Man*, has relations of a vital kind with all members of the human family, of which He is the Redeemer and the Head, and of which He will ultimately be the Judge. I cannot define these relations, because Scripture has not defined them; but I am sure that He, who through His Incarnation has received the unspeakable office of calling men from their graves, and declaring their true character and deserts, and fixing their eternal condition, must have a relation to every man who shares the human nature assumed by Himself, which, if philosophy cannot define, scepticism has at least no right to deny.

Christ the
real source
of all light.

And thus, without pretending to dive into mysteries not intended to be fathomed by man, I think we may say, that the relation in which

the faith of Christ stands to other influences which have been brought to bear upon the world, need not be a source of disquietude to him, who bears in mind the doctrine of the being of our Lord Jesus Christ. We know little as to what was necessary, in order to prepare for His coming, and to ensure the reception of His Gospel and the safety of His Church; but we may well believe, that whatever has contributed to these great results has been His doing, and that He, who communed with Abraham and the prophets, was also at work in other nations beside that of Israel, preparing the way for His own coming, making the nations of the world ready to receive Him.

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VIII.

II. The same kind of reasoning holds with respect to the other point, which I proposed to bring before you. It seems to me, that a difficulty must often strike the mind of a thoughtful man, when he considers the relation in which the unconverted and unbaptized nations stand to the Church of Christ. I know very well, that, so far as practice is concerned, we should do wisely to bear in mind the charge of our Saviour, who, when asked whether few would be saved, answered, *Strive to enter in at the strait gate!* I know that we have enough to do to make our own *calling and election sure*, without inquiring concerning the calling and election of those who are less highly blessed than ourselves; still it must be remembered, that this view of the case may be easily perverted, so as to become merely ungenerous and selfish; moreover, the religion of Christ is, and ever will be, canvassed in this aspect, and sometimes answers are given to the

Relation of
Christ to
the Hea-
then.S. Luke
xiii. 24.2 Pet. i.
10.

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VIII.See Note
40.

question — *Are there few that be saved?* when asked concerning the men before the time of Christ and the Heathen who have never heard His name, so different from His own answer, so dreadful in themselves, and so destructive to the cause of Christian truth, that it seems to me not an unnecessary meddling with divine mysteries to say a few words upon the subject, mysterious though it be.

Theories on
the subject
sure to be
erroneous.
See Note
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The first thing to be remarked is, that anything of the nature of a theory upon a subject of this kind must be almost certainly erroneous. That *limbus patrum*, which some of the later fathers invented for the holy men before the coming of our Lord, is an instance of the danger of theorizing in a matter essentially beyond human cognisance: it is an attempt to express by a formula the ways of God, which in the spiritual world never has been effected, and, in the nature of things, never can and never will be. For ourselves, who have been baptized into Christ's Church, we know that our justification depends upon *faith which worketh by love*; and no one has any right to complain of want of light, if he miss the road to heaven; but to conclude from this, that we are competent to pronounce concerning God's dealings in another world, towards those, with whom in this He has dealt in so different a manner from that adopted towards ourselves, is unnecessary, presumptuous, unjustifiable, and mischievous.

Gal. v. 6.

The great
principle of
judgment
according

Again: though we are not entirely enlightened concerning the ways of God in matters not touching our own conduct, yet we have one principle

of God's dealings revealed to us in both Old Testament and New, upon which we may securely rest. The principle is that of judgment according to works,—*deeds done in the body, whether good or bad*; a principle, put in its most striking form, and the most suitable to my present purpose, when we find it thus enunciated in the words of the Psalm—*Thou, Lord, art merciful, for Thou rewardest every man according to his work.* Yes—*merciful*, because this is the righteous rule of His judgment,—*merciful*, because He will not adopt any of the capricious rules of discrimination that man would attribute to Him, but act upon a principle to which all men perforce agree, as being the one only rule of righteousness and truth. Now if, instead of endeavouring to define precisely the relation in which untaught Heathen stand to the Saviour of mankind, we hold fast the great truth that they and we shall be equally judged righteously, then we may possibly find it a mystery, that the Gospel has not been more generally spread and received, but we shall not be afflicted by the thought, that the good news of a Saviour to the few have been a message of wrath to the many.

The chief light, however, which lightens the darkness of this question, is that which shines upon it from a revelation of Christ to mankind, such as that which the text contains. Christ has received authority to execute judgment, *because He is the Son of Man*;—that stooping to our infirmities, that assumption of human flesh, that experimental knowledge of temptations and trials, that dearly bought power of sympathising with

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VIII.to works a
light upon
this sub-
ject.

Ps. lxi. 12.

The chief
light is that
which
shines from
the text.

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human sorrow, constitute the very ground of the exaltation of Christ to the office of supreme Judge of mankind: and if we needed a guarantee, that the judgment of God will be one of mercy and justice and truth, I do not know what better guarantee we could have, than that which is involved in the inseparable union of the human and divine in Him, by whose mouth the judgment is to be given. For, although any notion which we may form of the final judgment,—a judgment, be it observed, the certainty of which can only be denied upon principles of the grossest materialism—although any notion of this judgment, I say, must of necessity be inadequate, and probably in many respects false, and at best can only be an imperfect image and shadow of the great reality, yet certainly we may suppose that we are intended to learn something concerning the nature of it from the truth first revealed by the lips of Christ, and afterwards impressed by His Apostles, namely, that the office of judging belongs to that Person of the blessed Trinity, to whom belongs the work of redemption: the guilt of those, who have sinned against the light of the Gospel, and have trampled under foot the mercies of God, and crucified Christ and put Him to open shame, may well be supposed to appear in its most overwhelming character, when the sentence upon unrepented sin is pronounced by the lips of Him, who humbled Himself that He might put sin away: and on the other hand, the announcement of such a Judge forbids us to harbour in our minds theories concerning the judgment of those, who have never heard the name of Christ, such as men who permit themselves to

See Note
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indulge in theories have sometimes not hesitated to construct.

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If it be said that thus to speak is to depreciate the value of the Gospel, it may be answered, that the same view is distinctly urged by S. Paul. You will remember, that, in the opening of the Epistle to the Romans, he deals very severely with those, who seemed to imagine that a different judgment remained for them from that reserved for the Heathen, in virtue of their being the chosen people of God: and he declares, that God will *render to every man according to his deeds, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile, because there is no respect of persons with Him*, and that all this will come to pass *in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ*. And so far does the Apostle press this argument, that he imagines himself to be met by the objection, *What advantage then hath the Jew?*—an objection precisely analogous to that which may be made against those, who, not desiring to undervalue the blessings of the Christian Church, would yet maintain the great truth, that all men must be judged according to their works. I might therefore be satisfied to cover the argument with the broad shield of S. Paul; but I would rather add this remark, that to any one looking on from without, contemplating the Church from a merely intellectual point of view, it seems to me that there will be always great force in the objection, parallel to that supposed by S. Paul to be urged against himself: *What advantage hath the Jew? and what profit is there of circumcision?* may very readily be translated into this,—*What advantage hath the*

The authority of S. Paul quoted.

Rom. ii. 6,
10, 11;

ii. 16;

iii. 1.

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VIII.*Christian? and what profit is there of baptism into Christ?*

For the dilemma may be made to seem complete,—either there is no salvation to any but Christians, and then all others are certainly lost,—or else salvation is open to all according to a judgment by works, and then the Church is useless.

See Note
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But, indeed, the fallacy consists in attempting to reduce to a dilemma the inscrutable ways of God. God never bade us theorize upon His deeds: He has told us that all men will be judged according to their works, because that is the great law of His righteous government, and it concerns us to know it; He has given us the light of Christ, and bid us walk in that light, and spread the blessings of it to our brethren who sit in darkness: and forasmuch as we know little or nothing beyond this, there will (as I have said) be always a difficulty for the intellect, which they, who look upon the Church from without, may dwell upon as much and as loudly as they please. And the best—perhaps the only—solution of the difficulty is that, which is to be found in the personal knowledge of Christ; I mean, that any one, whose eyes have been opened by the sanctifying Spirit to see in the man Jesus the Son of God and the Saviour of the world, who has realised the truth of the Catechism, that *he has been made by baptism a member of Christ, a child of God, and an heir of heaven*, and who has nourished his soul with those blessed memorials of the Lord's cross and passion, which He Himself declared to be His body and blood, will have no practical difficulty in giving an answer to the question—*What advantage hath a member of Christ?* If ever there were men, upon whom

the mystery of God's dealings pressed with almost insupportable weight, it must have been the Apostles themselves: standing as they did, few in number, in the midst of a terrific and polluted and almost universal idolatry and fearful corruption of morals, what must have been their thoughts if they ventured to speculate beyond the practical line of duty? but they never questioned the value of the Gospel of which they were the bearers, because they knew Christ and His love constrained them; they did not doubt that they had a treasure in their keeping, and that it was their duty and work to dispense it; and so they did not speculate, but they acted; they did not concern themselves with the condition of those without, so much as with the infinite blessing conferred upon those who had come to the knowledge of the truth, and so had been made free. And this apostolical example must ever be followed by those, who desire to have that peace, which Christ left as a legacy to His Church: it is not in the intellectual mastering of every difficulty, that such peace is to be sought, but in that knowledge of Christ, of which the Apostle speaks in connection with growth in grace: at the same time it is well, and indeed necessary, to look all difficulties in the face, and to satisfy ourselves that they arise not from any want of truth in the Gospel, but from our own essential incapacity to fathom the mysteries of God.

Hence it has been my design in this Lecture, not to deny that difficulties arise from the consideration of the relation in which the kingdom of Christ stands to the rest of the world, nor yet

Conclu-
sion.

² Pet. iii.
18.

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to assert that those difficulties are easily explained and incapable of assuming a formidable appearance to an honest mind; but rather to suggest, that he who fixes his mind upon the Lord Jesus Christ, as the Judge as well as Redeemer of mankind in virtue of his humanity, can afford to leave the difficulties unravelled, knowing that the Judge of all the earth is He who humbled Himself to dwell upon it in human flesh. And now, in bringing the subject to a close, allow me to remind you of a passage in the history of our Lord, which well illustrates at once both our danger and our duty. We read in the conclusion of S. John's Gospel, that S. Peter, having declared in a very emphatic manner his love and allegiance to Christ, received the command, *Follow Me*; and that, looking round, and seeing S. John also following, he asked the question, *Lord, and what shall this man do?* *Jesus said unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou Me!* Now here we have in a parable the command which Christ gives to all who love Him, namely, *Follow thou Me!* a plain practical precept, which we may perform if we will, and for the neglect of which there is for us no possible excuse. But the tendency of the human mind not unfrequently is to ask concerning others, *Lord, and what shall this man do?* Here is a poor heathen, who has never heard Thy name—what shall *he* do? Here is a man, who has been brought up in a nominally Christian country, and yet in as dire pollution and as intense ignorance as any Heathen land can shew—what shall *he* do? Here is a man, who has enlightened the world with his noble thoughts, whom Chris-

An illustration taken from the history of our Lord.

S. John
xxi. 19;

vers. 21,
22.

tian writers have deemed almost inspired, who has been one of the great agents in the purification of mankind, yet he too a Heathen,—what shall *he* do? And here are others—thousands and millions—whose spiritual condition I can shape into no theory, but concerning whom theories have been made, at which my blood curdles, and my inmost sense of right revolts—gracious Lord, who art the Judge of all men, and who hast Thyself condescended to become the Son of Man, what shall all these do?—Have we any right to deem the answer insufficient, if to such questions as these, which in no way touch our practice, except as arguments for spreading the knowledge of the Gospel among mankind, we receive from Him, who loved the race made in His own image, who redeemed them with His own blood, and who cannot be either unreasonable or unjust, such a reply as this, *What is that to thee? Follow thou Me!*

LECTURE IX.

SCIENCE IN ITS RELATION TO THE CHRISTIAN FAITH.

Preached on Sunday, October 21, 1855.

I TIMOTHY VI. 20, 21.

O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called :

Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen.

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IX.

Possible
misappli-
cation of
the text.

NOTHING can be easier than to misapply and misuse these words, as they stand in the English text. Nothing can be easier than to found upon them warnings concerning the dangers of scientific and philosophical studies, the necessity of making human knowledge bow to revelation, of subordinating books of science to the one Book of God,—to make the Apostle an authority for speaking doubtfully of intellectual investigation in general, and more than doubtfully of some branches of study, which are thought to have come into collision with Holy Scripture. Nothing can be easier, in fact, than to take advantage of such a passage as the text, for the purpose of endeavouring to stultify the whole system of study, adopted advisedly in this place of (as we believe) “sound learning and religious education.”

That such a proceeding as this would in reality be a misuse of S. Paul's words is manifest at once to any one, who examines the original, and sees what his words were. He is exhorting Timothy to guard carefully that deposit of faith, that knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God—*ἡ παρακαταθήκη*—which our version paraphrases by the words, *that which is committed to thy trust*; and with this definite creed, this sure knowledge, he contrasts as things to be utterly avoided, profane and empty talk, and that which was called knowledge, yet had no right to the name—*ἡ ψευδώνυμος γνῶσις*—knowledge whose very name was a lie, because it was speculation and not knowledge, blind guesses at truth instead of truth itself. No person, acquainted with early Christian history, and aware of the mists of false philosophy, and speculation, and theosophy, through which the light of the Gospel had to shine upon the world, and who knows the luxuriance with which the weeds of gnostic heresies grew up in the Church, will wonder that S. Paul should make it a most solemn charge to Timothy, as one of the overseers of that Church, to hold fast the faith,—those articles concerning which he was able to say, not *I think* or *I speculate*, but *I believe*, and *I know*,—that form of sound words in which were contained the mysteries of the Birth, and Death, and Resurrection, and Ascension of Christ,—to hold fast this knowledge, and not to allow his mind to wander from this sure ground to the enticing fields of speculation, which the promoters of it gloried in calling by the name of *knowledge*, but called it by that name falsely. Nor was the charge thus given to Timothy one

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True meaning of S. Paul's words.

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of private interpretation only; it was useful to him, more than to others, because upon him as a bishop an especial responsibility devolved concerning the safety of the faith; and so it may be also, that in our own days an exhortation like that of the text, if it speak one word to the laity, may speak ten to the clergy; but besides this, S. Paul does in the text mark out, for the benefit of the whole Church, the distinction between the Christian faith and all religious speculations which can be put in competition with it, namely, that it is a *knowledge*, a deposit of something which is certainly *true*, and may be surely *believed*,—a *knowledge* which may be applied in various ways, may be meditated upon, may be more thoroughly apprehended through the medium of prayer and religious exercises and sacramental ordinances, but which as to its facts is complete, to which therefore no additions may be made, and for which no other knowledge may be safely put as a substitute.

Cases in which S. Paul's warning is not applicable.

Viewed, then, in this way—and beyond doubt this is the true way of viewing them—S. Paul's words in no manner apply to science or knowledge that is rightly so named. Even if we take the word given in our version, *science*, not in the restricted sense in which S. Paul probably used it, but in that more general signification which the word now usually bears, making it to comprehend all branches of knowledge which are the subject of scientific investigation, still, as soon as ever it can be made to appear that a science is truly such, and not such falsely and in name only, then it is removed from all application of S. Paul's warning to Timothy. So that if any science, or that which pretends to be such, satisfies these two

conditions,—first, that it is conducted upon principles, which leave us no room for doubt concerning the certainty of the results which flow from our premises; and, secondly, that its conclusions are applied entirely within the sphere of the science in question; then we may say, that there is no reason on religious grounds, why we should look upon that science with suspicion: rather should it be maintained, that a science which satisfies such conditions is to be deemed free of the Christian commonwealth, and to be so esteemed that to speak of it disparagingly should be regarded as irreligious and unchristian.

Now, I do not assert that there is no philosophy or science or speculation, or whatever it is ^{Science falsely so called still} to be denominated, in our own days, which S. Paul would regard as *science falsely so called*: on the other hand, I think that ours are times in which such falsely called science is unusually rife, and in which, as much as in any age since the time of the Apostles, we have need of the exhortation to hold fast the deposit of the faith; *to hold it fast*—just because it seems demonstrable, that the mistake made by the great captains of the army of error usually resolves itself into this, that they have let go the deposit, the form of sound words, the traditional historical faith,—in fact, the Apostles' Creed,—and have wished to substitute for the one unchangeable revelation of God in the Trinity of His ineffable Being, and specially in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, speculations concerning God and man, which assume shapes and phases varying with the mind speculating, and which must almost infallibly reduce themselves to

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but this
Lecture
will not be
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eration of
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The pur-
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light in
which the
study of
mathema-
tical and
physical
science
should be
regarded.

Pantheism for the wise and prudent, and Atheism for the simple and the babes. It is not my intention however to deal with questions connected with what S. Paul would certainly have stigmatized as a false philosophy, but rather to take occasion from the subject, which the text brings before us, to regard from the point of view belonging to these Lectures a kind of science, which he would not have reprobated, and with the religious bearings of which we in this University are specially and very deeply concerned.

I speak of those infallible processes of reasoning and the exact study of the physical universe by means of them, which constitute one of the chief features,—in the minds of the country at large perhaps the most characteristic feature,—of this place. In the remarks which I make, I shall not separate the processes of reasoning from their applications, nor shall I exclude reference to branches of science, which, although not completely mathematical, are yet so pervaded by the mathematical spirit, as to entitle their conclusions to be received as established truths. Now, that S. Paul would not have described this kind of science as *science falsely so called*, we may perhaps feel satisfied from the mere fact, that it clearly is not so; you may hold what opinion you please concerning its absolute or relative value, or the pleasure that it is capable of affording to the mind, or the advantage of using it as a means of education, or the danger of doing so, and the like; but beyond doubt it is truly *science*, truly *knowledge*, and in this differs from almost every other department of human thought, that in it you

can say positively, I *know* this or I *know* that; you may enunciate the most stupendous propositions concerning the laws of God's universe, and say, these propositions are true,—no one may deny them; any one who denies them can only do so in conjunction with the admission, that he has not the means of looking into the evidence. Science which has this standing-ground undoubtedly is not *falsely so called*; on the other hand, *science*, as synonymous with *knowledge*, and as distinguished from speculation, or opinion, or guessing, or assertion without authority, seems to be precisely the name which answers the requirements of the case: and hence I think we may certainly conclude, that the warning contained in the text may not fairly and honestly be used, with reference to that kind of science, to which this University gives so much attention, and to the study of which she invites her younger sons, as the best means (according to her judgment) of occupying their time, and of preparing themselves for future work. Nevertheless, one would be glad to know, what S. Paul *would* have said of scientific studies, or (which comes perhaps to the same thing) what *ought* to be said of them by any one who takes his stand as a member of Christ, and who can say from his heart, *I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord*. For indeed ^{Phil. iii. 8.} we ought to be able to see the propriety and wisdom of our studies, not merely when regarded from the low level of this world, but when contemplated from the high ground of Christ's cross; no special pleading ought to be required to justify them; there ought to be no feeling of an inconsistency between

LECT. IX. the studies of the University and her professedly religious character; we ought to be able to say as Christians, we believe in the sight of God that our system is holy and good.

No general defense of University studies attempted. See Note 45.

The possible dangers and countervailing advantages of the study in question will be exhibited.

First danger.

I do not however propose to enter into a defense of the studies of the University—this has been done by much more able hands—but only to regard the study in question in the manner appropriate to this course of Lectures: and this I shall do by directing attention to some of the forms of religious difficulty and danger belonging to the study, and then exhibiting the countervailing advantages, and especially shewing how the spiritual twilight of science is illuminated by, and also renders all the more glorious, that light of the glory of God which shines upon the hearts of men from the face of Jesus Christ.

(a) In the first place, it is obvious, that the very feature of mathematical and physical science, to which I have already alluded, as redeeming it from the charge of being *science falsely so called*,—that power which it gives to the human mind of saying, *I know*, with regard to questions of the most complicated difficulty, and of challenging assent on pain of confession of ignorance,—may be abused to very mischievous results. A mind accustomed to the mode of investigating truth, appropriate to this branch of science, may easily become so fascinated with the certainty and beauty of its results as to sacrifice to the net with which it has fished the sea of knowledge, to burn incense to its calculus, and so to expect rigid demonstration in departments of truth in which it is not to be had. Every mind is, in fact, liable to become

Hab. i. 16.

onesided by a particular course of study; but the result of such onesidedness is, in the case in question, of more seriously evil tendency than in many others: for, if any one addict himself to those studies, which come more nearly home to questions of duty and practical life, or which involve more of human relations,—studies connected with history and morals and religion, and the like,—he may (it is true) give up his right of entrance into one of the grandest fields of human thought, or may deprive himself of much intellectual delight, but he has done nothing to unfit his mind for appreciating the arguments, belonging to the most solemn and sacred subjects; but if a man learn so to idolize the methods and processes, which in physical science have led to such noble results, as to be unable to see truth except in the light of those methods and processes, then it is clear that he has injured his mind morally, strengthened one side of it at the expense of the other, and brought himself to the condition, not of intellectual strength, but of intellectual deformity. Hence the very excellence of the study constitutes its danger; its high character, as leading in the truest sense to *science*, makes it possible to turn its methods to bad account; and the complete and absolute conviction, of having attained to truth of a certain and very noble kind, may be the means of hindering a man from attaining to truth in other departments of knowledge quite as noble, and of far deeper human interest and more momentous personal concernment.

(β) But again; it is, I think, undeniable that the kind of study, of which I am speaking, has

Second
danger.

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See Note
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a tendency to bring the mind into collision with a number of religious difficulties, from which perhaps it might otherwise have escaped. Take, as a principal example, the character of Holy Scripture, regarded from the side of natural science. I should suppose that there is scarcely any one, who has read the account of the creation in the Book of Genesis—not to go any further—and who has studied God's works by the light of science, who has not spent a considerable amount of anxious thought upon the connection between the results obtained from the two sources, who has not weighed with some attention the various speculations and hypotheses and theories, which some writers have deemed necessary for the purpose of reconciling Moses with modern science. I do not adduce this as a difficulty, through which the greater number of men may not think their way; probably to many, the flaws, which are imagined to exist in the Mosaic delineation of the creative week, will appear in the same light, as though an ingenious man were to examine with a microscope the background of some sacred picture, forgetting that the painter's art consisted in concentrating attention on the central figure of a Christ; or, if this should seem to be a saving of Scripture by a metaphor, we might probably be well content to rest its character upon the trial, whether now, with all the light which science has thrown upon the vestiges of creation, we could give any account of the great phenomenon of the origin of the human race so simple, so intelligible, and so true, as that which Moses has left to us; certainly if we may judge from some recent attempts

to take the creation out of the hands of Moses, we may say, that neither science, nor philosophy, nor religion are likely to reap much benefit by the change. But this by the way: I merely intended to allude to the well-known and continually argued difficulties, connected with the character of Scripture viewed in the light of natural science, for the purpose of illustrating the position, that there are religious difficulties, or rather intellectual difficulties connected with the Christian religion, to which the eyes are very much opened by the study of physical science, to which, in fact, they cannot be shut; a simple man may be not aware of the difficulties; and a man, whose thoughts have been exercised chiefly in another direction, may have no keen perception of them,—they lie beside his path, they are not actual stumbling-blocks in his way; but to a man, whose mind has been habitually exercised in the accurate investigation of the laws of God's works, any apparent discrepancy between what he has been taught to believe as true from reading the Bible, and what he knows to be true from reading the book of nature, may become a difficulty of very appalling magnitude.

(γ) Once more: I think it must be allowed, Third danger. that the habit of contemplating God's works in nature, under the guidance of exact science, may possibly tempt the mind to regard God as the law of the universe, rather than as the one divine person from whom all law proceeds,—as the moving-spring existing in the universe, rather than as Him in whom all things exist. I am speaking now rather of a habit of mind, which possibly may

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be produced, and which probably often has been produced, than of that which ought legitimately to follow from the study of science pursued aright. And if this effect should follow, it is not to be denied, that it is one of very mischievous result to the mind; for it hides that side of the character and being of God, with which we, as His responsible creatures, have most to do,—His righteousness, His holiness, His hatred of sin,—and fixes the thoughts chiefly upon that side, with which personally and practically we are the least concerned. The necessary consequence of this distorted, or at least imperfect view of God, is to diminish the perception of moral evil, the sense of sin, the feeling of estrangement from God, and desire of union with Him as the only source of peace,—in fact, to injure the spiritual part of a man's being, and weaken its hold upon those mighty truths, with which the great interests of himself and his brethren are almost exclusively bound up.

The countervailing advantages.

In these, then, and possibly in other ways, which might be mentioned did time allow or my subject require, the study of exact science may have a mischievous effect. I desire neither to deny nor to exaggerate the possibility of evil results; but simply to admit it in all honesty and candour, and then to pass on to the other side of the question.

General remark: the advantage of a certain road to truth of any kind.

And in doing so I would observe in general, that any branch of knowledge which deals with the absolutely true, must of necessity be revered by us, whose minds have been constructed for the purpose of knowing truth. Even if we

should confine our attention entirely to that department which deals with the mere properties of number and space, to be able to say of a proposition, "*I know this to be true*," is to have attained a mental position of not inconsiderable elevation, and which ought to be accounted valuable. It is not the truth of the proposition, but the fact that the mind can assert it to *be* true, by which we are to estimate the value of a study which enables us to assume this ground: for the mind, which has been so enabled, ought to have obtained great advantage in its views of truth in general, its appreciation of the value of truth, the difference between arguing and proving, between speculating and knowing. But when we come to the application of mathematical processes to the investigation of the phenomena of God's world, to trace out the chain of cause and effect which binds together the universe, to examine the marvellous mechanism by which the heavens and the earth are sustained, and thus to arrive at a kind of knowledge totally inaccessible (be it observed) by any other means, then in addition to the more abstract benefits to be derived, we have a treasure in the concrete knowledge obtained, which ought to be highly precious, and to be deemed worthy of all exertion. For if, indeed, it were a religious thing for David to contemplate the heavens, and see in them a declaration of the glory of God and the excellence of His handiwork, then it may equally tend to piety with ourselves, to examine, according to the best means that the wit of man has devised, the mechanism of those heavens; and it ought to be regarded

Psalm viii.
xix.

LECT.
IX.See Note
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as no small privilege, belonging to the times in which God has cast our lot, that every man of average abilities and opportunities of study is able to know something, in the true sense of the word knowledge, concerning the wonderful order and beauty of the handiwork of God.

The ethical
effect of a
study
which leads
to infalli-
ble results.

Moreover, the ethical effect of the study of a science, which is at once difficult to master and certain in its results, ought not to be left out of sight. Engaged in a study of this kind, a man cannot easily deceive himself concerning the extent or profundity of his knowledge; or, if he has succeeded in doing so, he is easily undeceived. I do not say, that the exact sciences alone possess this advantage, but certainly they do possess it in a remarkable degree; a man may possibly be puffed up by his knowledge, but he is much more likely to be humbled by a sense of his weakness; and if a man's secular studies tend to produce a cautiousness in expressing opinions, a modesty of mind, a sense of the folly of wishing to seem wiser than he really is, then those secular studies not only harmonize with, but are the best allies and supporters of, those, which are more distinctly religious. In fact, the spirit of true science and the spirit of the Gospel are one.

See Note
48.

The tone
of mind
fostered by
such a
study a
preserva-
tive against
religious
instability.

But further; it might perhaps have been expected on *à priori* grounds, and has been demonstrated, so far as such a thing can be demonstrated, to be the fact, that the tone of mind imparted by the peculiar studies of this place is a good preservative against that feverish feeling of unrest, which has led some eminent men of late years to seek religious peace in secession from the

English Church. It is not to my purpose to attempt to analyse this phenomenon—one of the most remarkable and most melancholy that this age has produced—but I think that we should do injustice to the place of our education, if we did not gratefully recognise the fact, that no one—(I believe I am correct in the assertion)—that no one, who has given evidence of having applied himself to the peculiar studies of Cambridge, has been found amongst the number of the seceders. Nor do I perceive any reason, why we should be surprised at this result; for it would seem to me, that the effect of pursuing a line of study in which truth can be surely attained, and of observing philosophically the conditions which have in that study rendered the sure attainment of truth possible, ought to a thoughtful mind to be legitimately this, namely, to make it obvious in what departments of thought the same infallible certainty cannot be expected: this conclusion is not at all inconsistent with the admission, that mathematical study may sometimes blind a man's eyes to the cogency of moral evidence,—this is a very possible abuse,—but a mind, which is too keen to be led away into such an error, will be taught to see, more clearly than it otherwise could, the kind of reasoning appropriate to, and the kind of certainty attainable in, the various departments of human thought. How entirely antagonistic, for example, is such a tone of mind to that vicious system of canonizing new articles of faith, and making additions to the Apostles' Creed, of which we have lately seen at Rome so lamentable an instance!—an instance, which affords me a special

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IX.See Note
49.

illustration of the point upon which I am now insisting, because it enables me to call to mind the emphatic manner, in which one of our own most eminent theologians, (now gone to his rest,) warned us from this pulpit of the monstrous character of the innovation, and reminded us that any argument, which could prove the immaculate conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, must infallibly prove the same for all her ancestors, and so reduce itself to an absurdity.

The true
tendency
of such a
study to
lead men to
Christ.

But once more: as the pursuit of a study which is an infallible road to truth *may* lead to pride and self-conceit, yet *ought* to lead to modesty, and as the same pursuit *may* lead to an obtuseness of vision concerning moral evidence, yet *ought* to have the precisely opposite result, so also it is especially to be enforced, that although the possible abuse of science is to make men forget the higher attributes of God, the proper use of it is to lead men to Christ. If Christ be indeed the *wisdom and power* of God, if He *came into the world to bear witness to the Truth*, if *without Him was not anything made that was made*, then it may certainly be concluded on general grounds, that any knowledge we may have from other sources of the wisdom and power of God, any means of ascertaining truth, any insight into the wonders of those things which have been made, must have a necessary and important bearing upon the great work of knowing Christ and God as revealed in Him: and contrariwise, we may feel satisfied, that Christ, as the great Light of the world, will be able to cast a light peculiarly His own even into those regions of thought, which the

1 Cor. i.
24.
S. John
xviii. 37;
i. 3.

torch of science has chiefly been able to illuminate. But, besides such general reasoning, we may see particular grounds for asserting, that the legitimate result of science upon a thoughtful and religious mind is to demonstrate, in the most forcible manner, the need of such a standing-point for contemplating the difficulties and anomalies of the universe, as that which is afforded by the Catholic doctrine of the Being of our Lord Jesus Christ. For, in truth, the contemplation of the handiwork of God must ever result, as it did in the case of David, in the question, *What is man?* —aye, what is *man?* for this is the question of questions for those who themselves are men: we may obtain much accurate knowledge concerning the Heavens and the Earth,—we may gain such insight into the mysteries of the laws of the material world as shall quite astonish ourselves,—we may arrive, in fact, by science at a kind of knowledge, which an uninstructed man not only does not possess, but is incapable of apprehending so far as to appreciate his poverty; but if after all we have learned nothing concerning ourselves, have found no answer to those spiritual questions which men have in all ages asked, we are undoubtedly deficient in a knowledge, for which we might well be content to sacrifice all that we know. Yet, if science cannot tell us what we require to know, it can at least do this—it can assure us of the need of some other light: when we ask the question—*Where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding?* it can enable us fully to appreciate the answer—*The depth saith, It is not in me; and the sea saith,*

LECT.
IX.Psaln
viii. 4.Job xxviii.
12,

14.

LECT.
IX.

It is not with me!—no—the physical universe does not contain that wisdom which man's needs require; and he, who has fathomed most deeply the mysteries of God's creation, ought to have the most thorough and the most abiding conviction, that he needs some other and quite different manifestation of the wisdom and power and goodness of God.

Christ the answer to questions which science cannot answer.

See Note 50.

Here, then, we come to a point, from which the transition is easy from human science to divine knowledge, from God as seen in creation to God as revealed in Christ; and I wish you to perceive how that the coming of Christ into the world, and the history of His life and death, and resurrection, and ascension, supply answers to questions which we ever feel ourselves impelled to ask, and to which in the material universe we can obtain no sufficient answer. I find myself thus brought to the threshold of a wide, indeed almost infinite, subject, when my sermon is drawing towards a close; and I must therefore be content with offering some few illustrations of a view of the mission of our Lord Jesus Christ, the importance of which I am convinced will commend itself to all thoughtful minds.

Answer to the question, *What is man?*

Thus, if the contemplation of the universe presses upon us the question *What is man?* and gives no answer to the question in which we can without difficulty acquiesce, no answer which reconciles the conflicting evidence of his greatness and his insignificance, or which gives an intelligible theory of the distinction between his relation to God and that of other creatures, then we find in the birth of Christ the very answer we need.

The Word, who was with God and was God, became flesh: the Son of God became the Son of man. LECT.
IX.
Then men *are* precious in the eyes of God: the S. John i.
1, 14.
race of man is glorified in the manhood of Christ: and each individual man may rejoice, when he remembers that he is clothed in flesh, which God Himself condescended to assume.

Or again: if the question of the purpose of man's existence, his chief good, be one which thoughtful men have in all ages agitated, and concluded in various ways, which the tendencies of the flesh lead us to conclude in a very gross and sensual way, and concerning which the manifestation of God in the physical world supplies no aid, then we may see the question answered once for all in a plain and practical manner by the life of Christ;—answered in a manner intelligible to all men from the greatest to the least, and perhaps in the only way which could thus be made universally intelligible: He, who *came down from Heaven* 1 John vi.
38.
not to do His own will, but the will of Him that sent Him, is at once the proof and the example of what all men were sent into the world to do: and He, who, being equal with God, humbled Himself with unspeakable humiliation, and *took upon Him* Phil. ii. 8.
the form of a servant, has given us a lesson, which we could obtain nowhere else, as to the character of mind, which is pleasing to God, and which ought to be considered best and noblest amongst ourselves.

Again: the race of mankind have ever groaned under a sense of sin: the feeling of some spiritual gap between themselves and God is so universal, so painfully attested by sacrifices and Answer to
the ques-
tion, Will
God par-
don sin?

LECT.
IX.

dreadful rites, that it may almost be regarded as a human instinct. Yet the visible world affords no consolation : God, as seen in His works, is not God the pardoner of sin. Now this is the character, in which above all others God appears to us, as seen in Jesus Christ : there is no occasion to say a word in proof that this is so, because by the ordinary titles of Redeemer and Saviour we ever bear testimony to the fact ; but that which I desire to do is to impress upon you, how thoroughly the experience of the fulness and the emptiness of human science ought to lead us to welcome this revelation of God ; to have searched the universe, and found in it no answer, nor anything like an answer, to a question, which men have asked with agonizing cries in all countries and in all generations, ought to a wise man to be the best preparation possible for receiving that divine answer, which has been sent from Heaven in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, who *put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself*.

Heb. ix.
26.

Answer to
the ques-
tions, *Is
God a per-
son ? and
does He
love man-
kind ?*

And in near connection with this point, observe how the absence, or at all events the deficiency, of proof in the physical world of the personal love of Almighty God towards us ought to prepare us for such an unspeakable proof as that, which He gave by the assumption of our human nature. I have spoken of the tendency of physical science to make men contemplate God as the law of the physical universe, the mainspring of the machine, the soul of the world ; but surely the conviction of the reason, that this *cannot* be God, ought to lead us to hope, that somewhere God has made a revelation of Himself,

higher and better than that which the material world contains; and he who is driven thus to search for a revelation of God may be satisfied that he has found what he needs, when he finds God speaking to him, and sympathising with him, in the person of Jesus Christ.

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IX.

And once more : if the question of their future condition has ever perplexed mankind, if the physical universe tells only of decay, and yet man's spirit recoils from the thought, then we may find a divine solution of the question in the union of the human and divine in the person of Christ, and the impossibility that His holy body should see corruption. The resurrection and ascension of Christ, however much they may differ in their circumstances from anything which can befall ourselves, do yet declare in a manner which simple men and philosophers can alike understand, the will and purpose of God concerning those, whom He created in His own image, and whom His blessed Son has redeemed.

Answer to
the ques-
tion, *Will
man live
after
death?*

These are but a few hints of the divers ways, in which Christ comes in as the revealer of mysteries, as the true light which shines upon the darkness of this world. You will perceive, that I have led you to a point of view, rather than exhausted or attempted to exhaust the subject; I have wished to make it appear, not only that the kind of science to which we give so much attention has advantages as a noble and manly exercise of thought, and as leading to truth with a certainty belonging to no other subject, but that in reality it is a good preparation for receiving that revelation of God, which teaches precisely

The preceding paragraphs contain only hints of a general view.

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those truths which science cannot teach, and supplies precisely those wants which science cannot supply: I have wished to urge, that if the mind be deeply exercised with this kind of science, then it ought not to be thereby rendered so wise in its own conceit as to account the cross of Christ foolishness, but should rather be led by the extent of its knowledge to seek in Christ, as the wisdom and power of God, a knowledge which we all need, not as philosophers but as men, and for which we may search elsewhere in vain.

This subject may be profitably considered by those entering upon their Cambridge course.

And one reason why I thought it well to treat of this subject at the present time is this: I am probably speaking to many who are just entering upon their course of study, the majority of them perhaps intended, like Timothy, to have in future days pastoral charge in Christ's Church: in preparing for this charge the University invites them to give their attention in a large degree to human science, and the question therefore naturally arises—nay, it forces itself upon our attention as honest men,—is it science falsely so called? or if not falsely so called, is it science to be looked upon with suspicion, to be disparaged by those who have the great work in hand of preaching the Gospel to their brethren? in fact, would S. Paul, if now on earth, have charged us to avoid the oppositions of science, and to hold fast the faith? Beyond doubt he would have charged us to hold fast the faith, now as in the beginning; but I think that he would also have subscribed to the principle, that the faith will be best defended, indeed, in these days can only be effectually defended, by those who have drunk deeply of

human knowledge. The true antidote to science falsely so called, that science which now as of old degenerates into profane and vain babblings, which confounds speculation with truth, and makes scepticism the paradise of the human soul,—the true antidote (I say) is science rightly so called, science which is cautious in its generalizations, and modest in its pretensions, which knows its weakness as well as its strength, which is ready to accept in simplicity and with gratitude the revelation of God manifest in the flesh, because it has ransacked the universe and not found the revelation which man requires. O my young Christian brethren, *avoid profane and vain babblings and oppositions of science falsely so called*, but do not avoid such science as this : rather make use of true science for the destruction of error, for the defense of God's truth, for the keeping of that which is or will be committed to your trust ! And so grace be with you. Amen.

LECTURE X.

CONCLUDING LECTURE.—THE GIRDLE OF TRUTH.

Preached on Sunday, October 28, 1855.

EPHESIANS VI. 14.

Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth.

LECT.
X.

This course
of Lectures
to be con-
cluded
with an ex-
hortation
to stead-
fastness in
the faith.

THE design of this course of Lectures has been to shew, that the doctrines of our religion may be advantageously contemplated, and its difficulties safely estimated, from the standing-point afforded to Christians by the Catholic doctrine of the being of our Lord Jesus Christ. I have endeavoured to enforce the principle, that if the incarnation of the Eternal Son be admitted as the great postulate of the faith, and if the rest of God's dealings be regarded in the light of this one cardinal fact, a wonderful and most welcome aid will be supplied to him, who meditates upon the mysterious economy of God. The principle has been illustrated by various examples, which have commended themselves on different grounds of fitness. To-day I propose to bring the course to a close by an exhortation, of as plain and practical a character as possible, to steadfastness in the faith.

The whole
armour of
God

With this view I have chosen as a text a passage from that well-known exhortation to the Ephesians, in which S. Paul warns them of the

power and subtilty of their spiritual enemies, and charges them therefore to put on *the whole armour of God*: twice he uses the expression—*the whole armour of God*—as if to impress upon the minds of Christians the extreme danger of their position in this world, and the infinite necessity of being clothed in a panoply, such as no human skill can forge. *Take unto you*, says S. Paul, *the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.* LECT.
X.

Now there is very little difficulty in transferring to Christians of our own times the warning and advice given by the Apostle to the Ephesians. If *the wiles of the Devil* be different now from those to which S. Paul alluded, they are no less crafty and quite as well suited to their purpose: if S. Paul, though speaking to a Church, against which the powers of this world were arrayed, could yet say, *we wrestle not against flesh and blood*, perceiving (as he did) the much more formidable hostility of the spirits of evil, the same thing may much more readily be said by us, in whose days the grosser forms of opposition to the Gospel have gone by, and have given way to an opposition of a more subtle and intellectual kind: and if S. Paul thought it necessary to urge the need of divine assistance, in order that Christians might overcome their adversaries, this too is a truth to be insisted upon in all times, and one, of which they, who have contended the most vigorously against Satan, will be the most ready to acknowledge the force. Hence the Apostle's catalogue of armour is to be regarded as not out of date, the art of war not so to have changed as to render

Ephes. vi.
13.

as neces-
sary now
as ever.

LECT.
X.

it useless for us to be armed with *the breastplate of righteousness, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God*; and he, who would exhort his brethren to resist the enemies of their souls, could probably not do better than base his exhortations upon the description, which S. Paul has given to us, of the panoply of God.

One portion of the armour chosen for consideration in this Lecture.

I have, however, selected from that description only one sentence,—have taken, so to speak, one portion of the armour, the use of which I desire to impress,—and I have done so, because the exhortation contained in the words—*Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth*, supplies in itself abundant matter for our consideration, and expresses as distinctly as I could desire the moral which I would append to these Lectures. Moreover, it is to be noted, that the girdle of truth is that which S. Paul places at the head of his catalogue, as though to be girt with this piece of armour were the prerequisite for the proper use of the rest; he speaks of it as that, by help of which a man is emphatically to be made to *stand*, being girt with which he is to be able to hold that posture of uprightness, which belongs to him as a man, and which enables him alone of all living creatures to look up to Heaven. There is thus apparently a peculiar importance assigned to the fact of the soldier of Christ being girded with truth; and it will not, therefore, be deemed any disparagement of the rest of the Christian armour, if I choose one particular portion, and direct attention wholly to that.

S. Paul
will be re-

Now, in the exhortation, *Stand therefore, having*

your loins girt about with truth, S. Paul would seem to refer to truth abstractedly,—to honesty and truthfulness of character, love of truth as being from God, hatred of lies as being from the Devil,—and not to refer so distinctly to the holding of concrete truth, the knowledge and retention of what is true, especially of the revealed truth of the Gospel. Nevertheless, I shall so far deal freely with the text, as to consider it to be suggestive of both meanings; for both are unquestionably in accordance with its spirit, and perhaps neither of them can rightly be said to be more important than the other.

LECT.
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garded as
referring to
truthful-
ness of cha-
racter and
also to con-
crete truth.

(1.) Certainly that meaning of the text, according to which it implies the necessity of honesty and truthfulness of purpose, as primary conditions of being strong in the Lord, is one, the importance of which belongs to all ages of the Church. Exhortations to the fear of God, or to faith in Christ, though not contradicting the great truth of the operation of the Spirit of God upon the spirit of man being the only source of divine life, must ever be based upon an appeal to the judgment, as assenting to that which is propounded as true, and to that which is demanded as reasonable. The choice between the God who has revealed Himself in Jesus Christ, and all other objects of worship, must ever be made upon the principle enunciated by Elijah upon Mount Carmel, as that upon which it became the people of Israel to make their election between Jehovah and Baal: the address of the Prophet—*How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him*, may always be used, or

Truthful-
ness of cha-
racter ne-
cessary for
the soldier
of Christ.

1 Kings
xviii. 21.

LECT.
X.

rather no other argument has any right to be used, in pressing the claims of revealed religion upon the consciences of mankind; and it is manifest, that no homage can be worthy of being received, except that which is offered upon the same principle,—the principle, that is, of worshipping God, in accordance with the revelation which He has been pleased to make of His person and His purposes, because the reason and judgment assent. And with regard to the Apostolic writings in the New Testament it may be observed, that however clear it may be that appeals are made chiefly to the heart, however certain that the argument for devotion to Christ is the love which Christ first shewed towards ourselves, still there is never any appearance of a wish to recommend a course inconsistent with that which is in one place so manfully enunciated—*I speak as to wise men, judge ye what I say*. Nor, indeed, would any other mode of dealing have been suitable to the character of those, who professed to follow the teaching and imitate the example of Him, who *came into the world to bear witness to the truth*, and who declared that they *who were of the truth* were they *who would hear His voice*.

1 Cor. x.
15.

S. John
xviii. 37.

The need of truthfulness not easily denied in word, but may be neglected or may be abused.

Of course, when the principle of basing the claims of revealed religion upon essential truth, and appealing to the reason in behalf of God, is enunciated in express terms, he would be a hardy man who would venture to speak against it: when Elijah made the appeal, to which I just now adverted, we read, that *the people answered him not a word*, for however much they had belied the principle by their practice, they felt that against

the principle itself there was nothing to be said. And yet it appears to me, that the necessity to a Christian of having his *loins girt about with truth*, requires to be urged in these days for more reasons than one. The principle may on the one hand be admitted, and may be practically neglected; and on the other it may be admitted, and may be practically abused. When I speak of its being admitted and practically neglected, I do not refer to the case of those, who, admitting the solemn truths of religion in word, are seduced by the world, or the flesh, or the devil, from living the life of holiness, which in consistency they are bound to live; I refer rather to the case of those, who are led by the very love and zeal which they have for the truths of revelation, and the value which they cannot but attach to the Gospel, to adopt insensibly, concerning subjects of divine knowledge, methods of reasoning and principles of judgment, which in human matters would be seen at once to be faulty or worthless. Thus it has come about, that persons, upon whose purity of intention I would not cast the slightest suspicion, have sometimes endeavoured to falsify the plain results of science in order to prop up some theory concerning revelation, and that men have been prevented from accepting what has been proved to demonstration, because it interferes with some notion which they have formed concerning the construction of Holy Scripture. That injury is likely to result to the mind from forsaking the highroad of truth, upon any excuse whatever, is, I suppose, sufficiently clear; it is not, however, with this result that I am chiefly concerned now; I

LECT.
X.How it
may be
neglected.

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desire rather to lay stress upon the injury that is done to the cause of truth itself, the stumbling-block that is put in the way of weak consciences, the opportunity of attack that is given to the adversary. For, indeed, in an age of searching investigation, when all subjects of human thought are submitted to a severe analysis, and questions which once seemed settled are reopened, and in some cases ancient judgments reversed, nothing can be more injurious to the character of the Christian religion, than the suspicion, that it shuns examination, that its claims are in antagonism with demonstrated truth: the great point to be borne in mind would seem to be this, that, while on the one hand, the claims of our Lord Jesus Christ to be that which the Creeds assert Him to be, and the cognate questions of the authenticity of the sacred writings and the like, are open to all investigation, and, if true, will bear every test by which truth can be discerned, on the other hand, it is not to be expected, nor has it ever been maintained in the Church, that true living faith in Christ and love for Him, can flourish in the cold soil of mere intellectual conviction. Had this point been duly regarded, it would not have come about, that whereas, Hume taunted Christian believers with having no standing-ground upon evidence, and therefore resting upon faith, a recent writer should have given vent to the precisely opposite taunt, that the Christian religion is defective in spirituality, just because it does rest upon evidence. Men in general are not Christians because they have read books of evidences, but because their mothers taught them to

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say the Creed and the Lord's Prayer, and because God blessed the seed which was sown in their childish hearts; but this admission is not at all inconsistent with the fact, that the Gospel speaks as unto wise men, who are bound to judge of its truth, and with this other fact, that they, who, led by their own jealousy for the cause of Christ, advance arguments or adopt methods of reasoning, which will not bear examination, do in reality, though most unintentionally, labour upon the same side as those who confessedly oppose it.

At the same time I quite admit, that there is a kind of false liberalism concerning religious truth, to the support of which the language just now used may possibly be perverted, but which it is far from my intention to countenance. It is easy for a man to fancy that his loins are girt about with truth, when the fact is, that they are girt about with indifference; and a person so armed may without difficulty assume an attitude of impartiality with regard to the discussion of religious questions, because he cares nothing concerning the issue; and sometimes it seems to be assumed, that a writer possesses a virtue, compensating for almost all vices, if he is apparently free from all bias either for or against revealed truth. I need hardly say, that nothing can be further from my thoughts than to encourage this mode of dealing with our holy faith: indeed, it seems to me, that the man, who is led by His love to Christ to use weapons in His defense which Christ Himself cannot approve, is far more pardonable than he, who is indifferent whether Christ be defended or not; Simon Peter using

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the sword in the garden of Gethsemane is the type of the one ; those who cried, *If Thou be the Christ, save Thyself*, may perhaps be taken as the type of the other : but both are wrong ; and the true path is taken by him, who, strong in his own faith and love, fears no honest investigation, and shrinks from adopting in matters of religion any tone of thought or line of argument, which he cannot justify upon the broadest grounds of calm judgment and sober reason.

Truth, attainable by human means, necessary for the soldier of Christ.

(2.) So much then concerning truthfulness, as a habit of mind, to be cultivated by all those who would acquit themselves in a worthy manner as soldiers of Christ. But in the next place it must be observed, that, in applying to ourselves the words of S. Paul in the text, we shall not err, if we regard them as referring not only to truthfulness, but to truth itself, to that which we know to be true. In speaking thus, I am not at present intending to point to that, which is sometimes spoken of in Scripture as emphatically *the* truth, the truth as revealed in Christ ; but I wish just now briefly to urge, that it would not be unworthy of an Apostle, if he should include under the title of truth, necessary for the protection of a Christian champion, all human knowledge, which is rightly so called. Of course all particular branches of knowledge have their own claims to be regarded as important, or valuable, or interesting : some are of direct practical utility, as tending to subdue matter to the designs and uses of men ; some are of singular interest to curious intellects for their own sake ; others are valuable, as tending to refine the taste, and to bring men into acquaint-

ance with the beautiful ; but I wish to urge, that, independently of all such claims, true knowledge has a right to be regarded as part of the armour of a Christian, specially as part of the armour of those who are called upon to lead their fellow-soldiers, as officers in Christ's army. I do not suppose that there ever was a time, when Christians could afford to despise the appliances of human knowledge : the case of S. Paul may be sufficient to remind us, that even an Apostle might be partially fitted for his office by his studies in human schools ; but anyhow, this present is certainly not such a time, and we, who make the severe studies of this place the preparation for the Christian ministry, bear testimony to our belief in the need of human knowledge for the support and due propagation of that which is divine. Many things might be said upon this subject with advantage ; indeed, I know of hardly any subject more capable of profitable treatment in this pulpit, than that which teaches men upon the first day of the week how to sanctify the knowledge, for which they toil during the other six ; but the view, to which I am chiefly led by the advice of S. Paul in the text, is that, which brings before us human knowledge as the girdle that a Christian is to be always girded withal, as that which is actually necessary for his support in the evil day,—no ornamental appendage, no loose accessory garment,—a help to his weakness, quite needful to enable him to stand firm, and to maintain his posture erect. *Quite needful*, I say ; and I am prepared to stand by the words ; for though there might possibly be danger in some congregations arising

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from the use of such language, as appearing to derogate from the simplicity of the Gospel, there is no such danger here ; because here we do not exhort men to go and seek for a knowledge that they have not, in order that they may understand divine mysteries, but we tell them how they should use that knowledge which they are supposed to possess, or at all events which it is their daily work to seek ; and we say to them, Do not consider that the progress, which you make in human knowledge, lies beside your path as Christians : as members of Christ, as His soldiers and servants, take a nobler view of your work than that ; Christ has taken the elements of this world, and sanctified them for Himself ; there is nothing really secular but what is evil, and all that is not evil ought to be used on the side of truth.

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(3.) Thus much I could not abstain from saying concerning the girdle of truth, considering *truth* to stand as the compendious expression for all that is known to be true by human investigation and proof. I have said that it would not be unworthy of an Apostle to have such truth in view ; at the same time I should quite admit, that if S. Paul, in using the words of the text, did refer to concrete truth, as forming a necessary girdle for a Christian soldier, he would especially have in mind that definite form of revealed truth, which in Scripture is described as emphatically *the truth*, or *the faith*, and which constitutes the foundation of Christ's Holy Catholic Church. Certainly S. Paul would never be afraid of laying too much stress upon the importance of Christians girding tightly about them, as that which was

essential to their support, the great doctrine of godliness, the incarnation of the Eternal Son, and all those truths which flow from this one mysterious spring : and it will be by no means inconsistent with the high character which has been attributed to human knowledge, if an attempt be made to do full justice to the distinctive peculiarities of that other kind of truth, which, according to the words of our Lord to S. Peter, *flesh and blood could not have revealed to us, but our Father who is in Heaven.* Indeed, it is of extreme importance, that, while it is perceived, that there is no antagonism, and that there ought to be the strictest most holy alliance, between Scriptural and human knowledge, it should be at the same time recognised, that there is a wide difference between the sources from which they are derived, the evidences by which they are established, and the conditions of their being rightly apprehended.

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S. Matt.
xvi. 17.

Let it be observed then, that whereas other knowledge is the slow accumulation of the experience of ages, and the result of the guesses and labours of gifted men, and is consequently an evergrowing and changing body of truth, Christian truth admits of no change and no growth : it admits of application to new circumstances, and indeed partially demonstrates its reality by its adaptation to the evervarying wants of men ; it admits too of growth, between the limits of a mustard seed and a full-grown tree, in its subjective apprehension by each believing heart ; but objectively it knows neither of diminution nor of expansion, it is ever one and indivisible, because it resolves itself ultimately into the one great

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mysterious fact, the manifestation of God in human flesh. If it be asked, upon what does the assertion of such a fact rest? it may be replied briefly, that it has an historical and traditional basis which ingenious men have not yet been able to move, and a basis in its adaptation to human wants which good men would hardly desire to move. This short answer might of course be developed into volumes; but a very few words will be sufficient for the purpose which I have in hand. It may be alleged, for instance, that the historical value of the Gospels has not been shaken, but very much confirmed, by all the sifting and criticism which they have undergone,—that their substantial truth and consistency have been made more apparent,—and that even this is enough for a foundation of the faith: because, if the general character and tenour of the life of Jesus Christ were anything like what it is represented in the Gospels to have been,—I do not say, if it has been reported accurately in every minute particular, but if it was anything like the picture we have of it,—there seems to be hardly any alternative, but to say with S. Thomas, *My Lord and my God!* Or, if the evidence of the Gospels should seem insufficient, we might turn to the testimony of Christ's living Church: when we consider that the great end of our Lord in His own ministry, in His commission to the Apostles, and in the work to which they devoted themselves, is represented to have been the founding of a Church, of a society to bear His Name and testify of His Gospel, and when we find as a matter of fact that such a Church ever has existed, and that, notwithstanding

S. John
xx. 28.

all divisions within it, and all defects arising from human infirmity, or the malice of the gates of Hell, it has never ceased to profess to rest upon this great truth of the divine Being of Christ, what a strong and most peculiar ground have we for asserting, that what we believe concerning Him is true! And how much is this ground strengthened, when we find the testimony of the Church depending, not only upon word of mouth, but upon the perpetual and unbroken celebration of that Sacrament, in which the whole mystery of the Gospel lies embalmed! How certain does this celebration make it to be, that Jesus Christ *did* command His death to be kept in mind by a solemn ordinance, and consecrated symbols, and spiritual eating and drinking of His flesh and blood; and how inconceivable that the command should have been obeyed, as it has been, from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, if Jesus Christ had not been one who spake with authority! Nay, the very doctrinal abuses of the Holy Sacrament may be perhaps regarded as being, in the good providence of God, a testimony to the awful light, in which the thought of celebrating Christ's death was ever regarded by the faithful. So that the great doctrine of the Gospel has not only an historical basis, but a traditional ground peculiarly its own, which would serve to establish it if we had no written books,—which in fact did in early days serve to establish it in lands, to which no written documents had penetrated; and it may be urged with confidence, that a candid mind will be unable to find any supposition, which will satisfy all the facts of the case, except that of

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Malachi
i. 11.

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Deut. xiii.
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Gal. i. 8.

the essential truth of the foundation upon which all the facts stand. But then it is quite true, and ought to be readily admitted, that this supposition will not be made, unless the foundation in itself be a worthy one ; that is to say, no historical or traditional ground will suffice for the basis of a religion for mankind, unless it appears that there is also a moral fitness and sufficiency in that which is proposed for their belief. We do not deny the correctness of the principle laid down by Moses, when he told the Israelites, that even signs and wonders were not to seduce them from the worship of the one God, and by S. Paul, when he bade the Galatians not to give heed to another Gospel, though preached by an angel from Heaven. But then we do not wish to deny it, because we are here brought to see the very strongest side of the Christian faith ; if there be one feature in the faith more striking than another, it is just this, its adaptation to the wants and instincts of mankind, —the manner in which it is felt to be a Gospel, —the readiness with which simple people receive it, and rejoice in it, and live by it, notwithstanding its mystery, or rather in virtue of its mysterious character. It would take me far beyond my limits, and introduce matter unnecessary for my purpose, if I were to enlarge upon that branch of Christian evidence, which depends upon the adaptation of the Gospel to the heart of man, and which after all exhibits itself with much greater power of conviction in the lives of Christians, than it ever can in sermons or in books ; but I desire to remind you of this great and practically most important part of the argument, in order to ac-

knowledge it as the necessary support and supplement of the historical and traditional side ; no amount of argument would ever turn religious belief into religious life, if the articles of the creed did not attest their divinity by filling up the void of the human heart, and by their constraining influence upon human conduct ; and on the other hand, no religion could maintain its ground and command the assent of thinking men, unless its historical claims and its objective truth would stand the test of the severest scrutiny. I desire to remind you, that the Truth of Christ rests upon both grounds, and that because this is so we are bound to gird it about our loins, as our only sure support in our conflict with the spiritual wickednesses of this world, our support in the hour of death, our support in the day of judgment.

I say, that we are bound to gird our loins with *this* truth ; to bind it close about us ; to declare that come what may, we cannot part with this. Indeed it was my purpose in this Lecture to press upon you simply and earnestly the necessity of being girt with the truth, rather than to enter into the argument as to the ground upon which the truth stands : but I have permitted myself to hint briefly at some of the evidence, upon which we rest in the matter of Christian truth, in order to exhibit as clearly as possible the great distinction, which exists in kind, between the truth as revealed in Christ, and all other truth whatever ; it is not that there is any antagonism between reason and revelation, nor that there need be any jealousy on the part of pious men of the operations of human thought ; but in the nature of things

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S. John
xiv. 9.

there are two kinds of knowledge, and there is no wisdom or philosophy in ignoring either the one or the other ; that which man can find out by searching, he has been permitted so to find ; that which he cannot find has been revealed by Him, who was able to say, *He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father*. And who is he that will not rejoice, as having found a treasure of incomparable value, when, in addition to all truths which he has been able to discover for himself, he learns this great and peculiar truth, that God has taken his human nature into inseparable union with Himself? Is he a philosopher, who despises such a truth? Has he any right to pique himself upon his discernment, if he can see beauty in the other truths, and yet can see none in this? And, on the other hand, if a man does profess to believe such a truth, can he in consistency do otherwise than S. Paul exhorts him in the text, that is, bind it close about him as his chief spiritual support? The man is consistent, who, professing to believe the truth, makes it the measure of the value of all other truths and the guide of his life ; there is a melancholy consistency too in the conduct of him, who, disbelieving the truth, opposes it, and endeavours to uproot it ; but there is no consistency in him, who repeats the Creed in Chapel or in Church, and who, in the ordinary course of life, in the pursuit of his studies, in his dealings with his brethren, betrays no evidence of his faith.

A concluding exhortation concerning the dangers intellectual

And because I feel deeply, as every one must feel, the extreme importance of young men,—young soldiers in Christ's army, soldiers too in whose steadiness and courage and fitness for

posts of trust many thousands have an interest besides themselves,—because I feel deeply the importance of such soldiers, more than any others, attending to S. Paul's exhortation to gird their loins about with truth, therefore I will not permit myself to be deterred, by the fear of saying things too simple for the University Pulpit, from giving, in the conclusion of these Lectures, a few plain words concerning the dangers, to which young soldiers of Christ are likely to be exposed.—It is obvious to remark that those dangers are twofold, intellectual and moral, and that from neither one nor the other can there be any absolute security in a place like this. With regard to intellectual dangers, of course, many sermons might be preached; but the remarks which I have to make, as arising from the tone adopted in these Lectures, may be compressed into a very few words. It seems to me, that a caution concerning intellectual dangers may sometimes be received at a disadvantage, because it may appear to imply a jealousy and suspicion of human thought; because it may appear to advocate the shutting of the eyes to one source of light, in order that the mind may be illuminated by another; because, in fact, it may appear to involve high treason to our Maker, who gave us powers for the discernment of truth. Now I think that no one, who has listened to the present or any other of this course of Lectures, can suspect me of any such leaning; in this Lecture I have urged, that when S. Paul bid Christians to be girt about with truth, he insisted upon that honesty and truthfulness of character, with which all lying, though it be on the side of God and His

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truth, is totally and irreconcilably inconsistent ; and I have urged also, that if we suppose the Apostle to have regarded concrete truth as a part of the girdle which Christians are to wear, we ought not to exclude, as having nothing to do with Christian faith, and the stability of Christian character, and the successful progress of Christ's kingdom, that knowledge, which grows indeed upon earth, but which yet ever looks towards Heaven ; hence I think, that I have a right to be heard with attention and candour, when I warn young Christians of the danger of omitting to gird tightly round about them that other and principal band of which the girdle of truth is composed, and which is the revealed Gospel of Jesus Christ,—when I warn them of the danger of losing sight of Christ as the fountain of wisdom and knowledge, and seeking peace in those various forms of rationalism, the root of which is the refusal to acknowledge any source of illumination, except that which is to be found in our own intellectual powers. It would be idle to deny that such danger exists, and it would be ungrateful not to acknowledge, that the best protection against it is a close adhesion to those principles of Christian teaching, upon which we have all been educated ; other foundation can no man lay, than that, which by God's grace was laid, when we were taught as children to bow the head and say, *I believe in Jesus Christ* ; that which I have desired to enforce in these Lectures, that which I desire especially to impress in bringing them to a close, is this, that the truth which we thus profess will be found to enlighten all other truths, that it will ever shine more brightly as it

¹ Cor. iii.
11.

is more devoutly contemplated, and that it is to be regarded as a prime necessary of every human soul, which he who holds is rich, though he have nothing else which he can call his own, and which he who has lost ought to excite our compassion as a fellow-creature in extreme penury.

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But while it is thus fully conceded, that there are intellectual dangers,—dangers to which, of course, some will be more liable than others, but against which the one protection for all is the holding fast the faith in Jesus Christ,—it is also to be admitted, that there are moral dangers, which practically are far more extensively felt. I should imagine, that for one case of the girdle of Truth being loosened or lost in consequence of intellectual objections to wearing it, there are a hundred cases of the same result being brought about by moral difficulties: the girdle is felt to be a weight, or it is fancied that it constrains the freedom of the limbs,—in other words, a young man has been brought up in the true faith, and, so far as his reason is concerned, is satisfied with the lessons he has learned; his is not the subtle intellect, which is sometimes at once the blessing and the trial of the possessor, and if scepticism were the only danger of the soul, he would surely be safe;—but faith cannot be held only as faith,—it must issue in practice, it must shew itself in the life or else stamp a man as a hypocrite; and therefore the man becomes uneasy, and the girdle frets and galls him; and then, how easy to find excuses for relaxing it, or getting rid of it altogether! intellectual difficulties can be pressed into the service; this point has been rendered doubtful by

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Prov. i. 8.

one critic, and this by another, and Genesis must give way to geology, and the Scriptures are convicted of contradictions, and Christian teachers are at variance amongst themselves, and so forth: such difficulties are ready at hand to him, who wishes to find them; in the nature of things they must be; they have been from the beginning, they ever will be till the end of time: and this being so, how easy for a man to apologize to his own conscience for dropping into a quiet indifferentism, which involves him in no exertion, no sacrifice, no crucifixion of the flesh with its affections and lusts! how easy to talk of the overwhelming difficulties under which the Christian scheme labours, and the deficiency of its evidences! *Evidences!* the true evidences for a young man, who has been brought up in the nurture and fear of God, are Temperance, Soberness, and Chastity; the true path of wisdom, is that which Solomon long ago marked out, namely, *to hear the instruction of a father, and not to forsake the law of a mother*,—to avoid those acts, which would make a mother's heart bleed or a sister's cheek blush,—to comport himself as one, who believes that he is the highest creature in God's world, and that he has no right to do homage either to the flesh or to the devil. This practical doing of God's will is now, as it ever was, and as our Saviour declared that it should prove, the necessary evidence of the truth of the Gospel; and so indispensable is it that young men should recognise this, that I have sometimes lamented, that, according to the arrangements of the University, the first attendance of our students at S. Mary's Church should be at a season, when

the preacher is bound by his office to deal with the difficulties, rather than with the duties, belonging to the faith of Christ: a time will probably arrive in the experience of almost all thoughtful men, when such dealing with difficulties will be required; to serve Christ may in the case of some involve a warfare against the darts of infidelity, quite as much as a struggle against selfishness and sensuality,—no one can be more ready to admit this than myself,—I admit that now, as of old, the Christian has to wrestle with enemies far more terrible than flesh and blood,—at the same time I feel bound to remind you, young Christian Brethren, that if ever a time does come to any one of you, when the truth of the Creed in which you have been instructed is no longer a question of dry discussion, but one which haunts your dreams and stirs the lowest depths of your being, and upon the answer to which all your peace depends, then a life pure, and self-denying, and Christ-like, will be the surest anchor of your souls.

O ALMIGHTY GOD, whom truly to know is everlasting life; grant us perfectly to know Thy Son Jesus Christ to be the Way, the Truth, and the Life; that, following the steps of Thy holy Apostles, we may steadfastly walk in the way that leadeth to eternal life; through the same Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



NOTES.

NOTE 1.

It would be useless, or rather endless, to give references in proof of the character of the infidelity belonging to the eighteenth century ; but a few words may perhaps be not without good result, in bringing out the contrast, which I wish to make, between the licentious infidelity which started with English Deism and culminated in the proclamation of the "goddess of reason" in the person of a French prostitute, and that very different infidelity from which danger is just now chiefly to be apprehended, and which affects to consider orthodox Christianity as not sufficiently pure and spiritual. Thus we find Bishop Berkeley in *The Minute Philosopher* (published in 1732) dealing with the supposed "vulgar error, that vice is hurtful," and representing his freethinker expressing himself thus: "There is nothing in that necessary connexion which some men imagine between those principles you contend for, and the public good. I freely own, that if this question was to be decided by the authority of legislators or philosophers, it must go against us. For those men generally take it for granted, that vice is pernicious to the public; and that men cannot be kept from vice but by the fear of God, and the sense of a future state; whence they are induced to think the belief of such things necessary to the well-being of human kind. This false notion hath prevailed for many ages in the world, and done an infinite deal of mischief, being in truth the cause of religious establishments, and gaining the protection and encouragement of laws and magistrates to the clergy and their superstitions. Even some of the wisest amongst the ancients, who agreed with our sect in denying a providence and the immortality of the soul, had nevertheless the weakness to lie under the common prejudice that vice was hurtful to societies of men. But England hath of late produced great philosophers who have undeceived the world, and proved to a demonstration

that private vices are public benefits. This discovery was reserved to our times, and our sect hath the glory of it¹."

Again, Dr Whewell in his *History of Moral Philosophy in England*, writes thus :—

"The general diffusion of the estimate of moral good and ill by the pleasure and pain to which it leads, produced a profligate and sensual tone of moral discussion. . . . As a prominent example of this spirit, we may take the well-known *Fable of the Bees*. This was a short apologue in verse, published in 1714, by a physician of the name of Mandéville, the professed object of which was to shew that Private Vices are Public Benefits ; that the vices, as they are usually held, of Selfishness, Luxury, and Lust, within certain limits, are the elements upon which the prosperity of a state depends, and 'that all the moral virtues are no better than the political offspring which flattery begot upon pride.' The work possesses little or no literary merit ; and is only remarkable for the notice it excited, and for the mode in which the author, when put upon his defence, supported his tenets. . . .

"The book was presented as a nuisance, on account of its profligacy, by the grand jury of the county of Middlesex, in 1723. And although this circumstance may be alleged, I hope justly, as proving that the poison of the principles promulgated by this author had not yet entirely pervaded English society, we may observe, on the other hand, that the Presentment states that many books and pamphlets are published almost every week against religion and morals ; and it assigns this general viciousness of literature as the reason for singling out this book, and another which is mentioned, for condemnation.

"Similar complaints, most emphatically expressed, are made by almost all the Divines and Moralists of the time. Attacks on religion and on morals, (for these were, as may be supposed, very generally combined), were so common and so licentious, that many pious and good men appear to have looked upon the progress of thought and feeling with despondency and despair²."

Robert Hall, in his preface to a sermon, entitled *Modern Infidelity Considered*, (preached in 1799) says, "To obliterate

¹ Dialogue II.

² Whewell's *Lectures on the History of Moral Philosophy in England*, p. 79.

the sense of Deity, of moral sanctions, and a future world; and by these means to prepare the way for the total subversion of every institution, both social and religious, which men have been hitherto accustomed to revere, is evidently the principal object of modern sceptics." And in the sermon itself he has the following fine passage:—

"The infidels of the present day are the first sophists, who have presumed to innovate in the very *substance* of morals. The disputes on moral questions, hitherto agitated amongst philosophers, have respected the *grounds of duty*, not the *nature of duty itself*; or they have been merely metaphysical, and related to the *history* of moral sentiments in the mind, the sources and principles from which they were most easily deduced; they never turned on the quality of those dispositions and actions which were to be denominated virtuous. In the firm persuasion that the love and fear of the Supreme Being, the sacred observation of promises and oaths, reverence to magistrates, obedience to parents, gratitude to benefactors, conjugal fidelity, and parental tenderness, were primary virtues, and the chief support of every commonwealth, they were unanimous. The curse denounced upon such as remove ancient landmarks, upon those who call good evil, and evil good, put light for darkness, and darkness for light, who employ their faculties to subvert the eternal distinctions of right and wrong, and thus to poison the streams of virtue at their source, falls with accumulated weight on the advocates of modern infidelity, and on them alone."

The preceding extracts will abundantly answer the purpose which I have in view. I think that we may well rejoice that the state of things, to which such passages refer, does not exist now; but I wish the reader to contrast it with the popular unbelief of the present day, in order that he may rightly estimate its character and his own dangers arising from it.

NOTE 2.

The necessity of adapting schemes of Christian evidences to the mental circumstances of the times may be seen, by comparing such arguments as are adduced in our own days against opponents of the faith, with those adduced in any other age from the days of the primitive apologists down to the present.

A very striking example will be found, of the change which has taken place in (comparatively speaking) recent times by referring to the system of evidences given in his *Pattern of Catechistical Doctrine*, by Bishop Andrewes, a divine whose singular natural powers and breadth of learning give great point to the illustration.—The following are some extracts :

“Of the Birth of Christ.

α. Sibylla almost setteth down every action and circumstance ; and by this many have been turned to Christianity, as Marcellinus and Secundanus.

β. And for this cause both Vespasian and Augustus would have destroyed all the Jews, but especially the tribe of Judah.

γ. And Rhodigin and Volateran leave us this of credit, that there was an altar in Egypt that was dedicated *virgini parituræ*, ‘to the virgin bringing forth a child ;’ like as that same *templum pacis*, ‘the temple of peace,’ should stand, *donec virgo peperit*, ‘until a virgin brought forth a child.’

δ. So doth also Postellus shew that there was another altar, intitled *ara primogenito Dei*, ‘an altar to the firstborn Son of God.’

ε. Also Augustus understanding by the wise men that both he and all the people should worship one that was born, would not be called *dominus orbis terrarum*, ‘the lord of the whole world,’ as he was before, but gave up that title.

ζ. Also for that in the day of His birth there appeared three suns ; but especially that of the star, whereof Pliny witnesseth, calling it *stella crinita sine crine*, i. e. a comet ; but it was a plain star ; of which many meditating have turned to the truth, as Chæremon among the stoics, and Challadius among the platonists, who thereupon went to Jewry and became Jews.

Of the Death of Christ.

α. The ancient Egyptians, when they write *vitam æternam*, ‘everlasting life,’ they write the sign of the cross, wherein howsoever they were directed, the mark was like and agreeable to the action of Christ’s death upon the cross to purchase for us everlasting life.

β. The universal eclipse and earthquake which was at that time that He died ; for by no natural causes can all the earth move, but it must have something to stay upon, confessed by

Pliny, lib. ii. cap. 25. Phlegon Trallianus' Chronicle. Neither is it by nature that the sun should be eclipsed the fourteenth day of the moon, when the moon was just at full, quite against the rules of astronomy.

γ. In the reign of Tiberius the falling of the oracles; as Plutarch writeth, "there came a sound to the mariners that great Pan was dead;" which great Pan who it was, all the wise men could not tell; and Nicephorus reporteth that the oracle at Delphos said it was *παῖς ἑβραῖος*, *puer Hebræus*, 'an Hebrew child.'

δ. Ambrose, Justin Martyr, and Tertullian, as Eusebius saith, testify that Pilate himself did witness in a letter to the Emperor Tiberius all these things of Christ Himself, His life, death, &c.

Thus much for the credit of the Gospel, and the story of His life and death¹."

After reading this, let any one turn to the pages of any modern apologist, and say whether some of the weapons of this most learned divine are not quite as much out of date as the military weapons of his contemporaries. At the same time let it be borne in mind, that many objections to the truth of the Christian religion, when answered once, are answered for ever, and that frequently modern objectors produce, as new, arguments which have been answered many centuries ago.

NOTE 3.

I refer here especially to such books as Mr F. W. Newman's *Soul*. The peculiarity of this book, and those of its class, is, that they are full of Scripture phraseology and Christian sentiments, while they contradict almost every article of the Christian Faith, and seem to delight in what is Christian, provided only that it be admitted to possess no objective truth. It is scarcely a caricature, when Mr Rogers says to one of the disciples of this school, "As I listen to you, I seem to see a hybrid between Prynne and Voltaire. So far from its being true that you have renounced the *letter* of the Bible and retained its *spirit*, I think it would be much more correct to say, comparing your infidel hypothesis with your most

¹ Andrewes' Works, Vol. vi. p. 53. (Anglo-Cath. Library.)

spiritual dialect, that you have renounced the *spirit* of the Bible and retained its *letter*¹."

This spiritual school seems to have a profound abhorrence of *evidences*: nothing can exceed the contempt with which Mr Newman speaks of such a mode of supporting the faith, in the work above referred to. He speaks of "the unmanageable character of what are called *Christian Evidences*," and paints very brilliantly the contrast between "the genuine champion of the Gospel," and the modern defender of Christianity—"a gentleman consulting dictionaries and grammars, referring to Tacitus and Pliny, &c. &c." How strange are the paths in which religious controversy moves! When Hume, (as I have remarked in Lecture X, page 186) made his attack upon Christianity, he took as the basis of offensive operations his great principle concerning testimony and experience, and having shewn, as he supposed, that on the ground of evidence the religion could make no stand, he congratulated Christians in an ironical and scornful tone, that they did not depend upon reason and evidence but upon faith. Champions rose up to answer Hume, "referred to Tacitus and Pliny," and shewed that they did not depend upon faith merely, but that they could make out a case which would approve itself to an honest and thoughtful mind; and now we are twitted with depending on evidences; and whereas Hume laughed at us for being obliged to rest upon faith, Mr Newman would have us think that the principle which Hume derided was after all the true one, with this exception, that according to him it seems to be well-nigh heresy, to believe anything. Every one will, I suppose, agree with Mr Newman, that an intellectual conviction arising from a perusal of evidences has no sanctifying influence on the heart; this is the doctrine which we have all heard from our childhood; indeed, few persons probably are aware that there are such things as evidences, until long after they have professed their faith in Christ. The notion that a discussion of evidences is the recognised means in modern times of converting the heathen is, I apprehend, a fiction of Mr Newman's own mind; but why evidence should be denied to have a legitimate province, and why the attacks of enemies based upon evidences should not be repulsed if possible on their own ground, it is easier to ask than to answer. Only conceive

¹ *Eclipse of Faith*, p. 45.

the triumphant clamour that would resound throughout the infidel camp, if it were admitted as a Catholic doctrine that the Christian faith had no historical ground upon which to rest !

With regard to the contempt which Mr Newman's spiritualism throws upon human study, I may refer the reader to Bishop Bull's sermon on 2 Tim. iv. 13. "The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments."

NOTE 4.

I wish to guard the observations here made with a qualification, in order that the sympathy expressed with minds in religious difficulty may not be misunderstood or abused. The mind may be allowed to fall into a weak, cowardly condition, in which difficulties may obtain a victory, of more or less importance, because they have not been vigorously met ; or, difficulties which are perhaps inevitable, but at the same time anything but fundamental, may be allowed by a mind in a morbid state to domineer over faith, in a way which could be obviated by a manly effort and God's grace upon it.

Abundance of illustrations of this remark might be gathered from Mr Froude's *Nemesis of Faith*, which might perhaps be not improperly designated by the alias of the "Biography of a mind diseased." I do not at all deny, that this book represents faithfully a great deal that has passed in the minds of young men during the last twenty years, but at the same time, I feel in reading it, that, in many cases, what the unhappy hero (I use the word unhappy as expressing the condition which the writer himself ascribes to him) requires, is a manly determination to look at the spectres, which haunt him, and see whether they are living or not. The language of Hamlet would be in keeping—

Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd,
Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from hell,
Be thy intents wicked, or charitable,
Thou com'st in such a questionable shape,
That I will speak to thee.

Yes, reader, if such spectres haunt you, speak to them, and make them say who and what they are. I take the following as an example of a state of mind, in which a man may be ever

frightened by religious difficulties, which will not bear the daylight of manly thought.

"Newman talked much to us of the surrender of reason," says Mr Froude; "Reason first of everything must be swept away, &c. While I was perplexing myself about this, there came a sermon from him in S. Mary's—once much spoken of—containing a celebrated sentence. The sermon is that on the development of religious doctrine; the sentence is this:—'Scripture says the earth is stationary and the sun moves; science, that the sun is stationary, and that the earth moves; and we never shall know which is true till we know what *motion* is.' For a moment it seemed as if every one present heard, in these words, the very thing they had all wished for, and had long waited for—the final mesothesis for the reconciling the two great rivals—Science and Revelation; and yet it was that sentence which at once cleared up my doubts the other way, and finally destroyed the faith I had in Newman, after 'Tract 90' had shaken it.¹ . . ."

I do not wonder at this sentence destroying faith in Mr Newman, but what I wish to remark is the marvellous phenomenon of such a sentence producing any other effect, than that of the feeling of having listened to what was monstrously absurd and untrue. I make all allowance for the influence which Mr Newman's very remarkable intellect would be sure in his better days to assert over young minds; but here we have a sentence, which is half a falsehood and half a sophism; and yet it appears, that the minds of his audience were in such a state that they imagined they had found the solution of the supposed difficulty of the opposition of revelation to reason. I assert the dictum attributed to Mr Newman² to be half falsehood and half

¹ *Nemesis of Faith*. Second Edition, p. 157.

² The passage as given in Mr Newman's published volume (p. 350) does not run word for word as given by Mr Froude, but thus:—

"Scripture, for instance, says that the sun moves and the earth is stationary; and science, that the earth moves, and the sun is *comparatively* at rest. How can we determine which of these opposite statements is the very truth, till we know what motion is? If an idea of motion be but an accidental result of our present senses, neither proposition is true, and both are true; neither true philosophically, both true for certain practical purposes, in the system in which they are respectively found; and physical science will have no better meaning, when it says that the earth moves, than plane astronomy when it says that the earth is still."

The word *comparatively* saves Mr Newman from the statement attributed to him, but does not really much alter the spirit of the passage; because what science tells us is, that in accordance with dynamical laws the

sophism, because the Scripture nowhere says that the earth is stationary and the sun moves, and science does not tell us that the sun is stationary and the earth moves, but a very different tale, as every one at all acquainted with dynamics knows that it must; but suppose there did exist this contradiction between Scripture and Science, which does not, still it would be rank sophistry to pretend that the award of the truth to one or the other could depend upon the knowledge of what *motion* is, seeing that motion can be explicitly defined, and anything called motion, and not agreeing with the scientific definition of motion, is not motion according to our definition.

Now, to minds which are in such a state as to be capable of being moved either for or against the truth of revelation by such statements as the above, I confess that I feel it difficult to extend the sympathy spoken of in the Lecture. At least I think that the patient requires food, exercise, fresh air, and tonics; not delicate handling and gentle treatment.

In connexion with this subject I will quote a passage from Mr Rogers's tract, *Reason and Faith; their Claims and Conflicts*, which, though somewhat severe, has much truth in it, and which I request any young reader of my Lectures to assure himself that he can read without wincing, before he claims sympathy in his religious conflicts:—

“There are no doubt some minds amongst us, whose power we admit, and whose perversion of power we lament, who have bewildered themselves by *really* deep meditation on inexplicable mysteries; who demand certainty where certainty is not given to man, or demand for truths which are established by sufficient evidence, *other* evidence than those truths will admit. We can even painfully sympathize in that ordeal of doubt to which such minds are peculiarly exposed—with their Titanic struggles against the still mightier power of Him who has said to the turbulent intellect of man, as well as to the strong ocean, *Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further,—and here shall thy proud waves be staid*. We cannot wish better to any such agitated mind than that it may listen to those potent and majestic words—*Peace—be still!* uttered by the voice of Him who so suddenly hushed the billows of the Galilæan lake.

“But we are at the same time fully convinced that in our sun cannot be at rest, and the comparison of the amount of its motion in a given time with that of the earth has nothing to do with the question.

day there are thousands of youths who are falling into the same errors and perils from sheer vanity and affectation ; who admire most what they least understand, and adopt all the obscurities and paradoxes they stumble upon, as a cheap path to a reputation for profundity ; who awkwardly imitate the manner and retail the phrases of the writers they study ; and, as usual in such cases, exaggerate to caricature their least agreeable eccentricities. We should think that some of these more powerful minds must be by this time ashamed of that ragged regiment of most shallow thinkers, and obscure writers and talkers, who at present infest our literature, and whose parrot-like repetition of their own stereotyped phraseology, mingled with some barbarous infusion of half-anglicized German, threatens to form as odious a *cant* as ever polluted the stream of thought, or disfigured the purity of language. Happily it is not likely to be more than a passing fashion ; but still it is a very unpleasant fashion while it lasts. As in Johnson's day, every young writer imitated as well as he could the ponderous diction and everlasting antitheses of the great dictator ; as in Byron's day, there were thousands to whom the world 'was a blank' at twenty or thereabouts, and of whose 'dark imaginings,' as Macaulay says, the waste was prodigious ; so now there are hundreds of dilettanti pantheists, mystics, and sceptics, to whom everything is a 'sham,' an 'unreality ;' who tell us that the world stands in need of a great 'prophet,' a 'seer,' a 'true priest,' a 'large soul,' a 'god-like soul,'—who shall dive into 'the depths of the human consciousness,' and whose 'utterances' shall rouse the human mind from the 'cheats and frauds' which have hitherto everywhere practised upon its simplicity. They tell us, in relation to philosophy, religion, and especially in relation to Christianity, that all that has been believed by mankind has been believed only on 'empirical' grounds ; and that the old answers to difficulties will do no longer. They shake their sage heads at such men as Clarke, Paley, Butler, and declare that such arguments do not satisfy *them*. We are glad to admit that all this vague pretension is now but rarely displayed in conjunction with the scurrilous spirit of that elder unbelief, against which the long series of British apologists for Christianity arose between 1700 and 1750 ; but there is often in it an arrogance as real, though not in so offensive a form. Sometimes the spirit of unbelief even assumes

an air of sentimental regret at its own inconvenient profundity. Many a worthy youth tells us he almost wishes he *could* believe. He admires, of all things, the 'moral grandeur,' the 'ethical beauty,' of many parts of Christianity; he condescends to patronize Jesus Christ, though he believes that the great mass of words and actions, by which alone we know anything about Him, are sheer fictions or legends; he believes—gratuitously enough in *this* instance, for he has no ground for it—that Jesus Christ was a very 'great man,' worthy of comparison at least with Mahomet, Luther, Napoleon, and 'other heroes;' he even admits the happiness of a simple, child-like faith, in the puerilities of Christianity—it produces such content of mind! But, alas! *he* cannot believe—his intellect is not satisfied—he has resolved the matter too profoundly to be thus taken in; he must, he supposes, (and our beardless philosopher sighs as he says it,) bear the penalty of a too restless intellect, and a too speculative genius; he knows all the usual arguments which satisfied Pascal, Butler, Bacon, Leibnitz; but they will do no longer: more radical, more tremendous difficulties have suggested themselves, 'from the depths of philosophy,' and far different answers are required now!"

I have given this long extract from a little book which is well worthy of the reader's notice, and which formed a kind of prelude to the same author's more elaborate work, *The Eclipse of Faith*, because it represents, in that pithy style in which Reviews delight, a morbid state of mind, with which (as I have said) I do not wish to express my sympathy. Mr Rogers is perhaps somewhat severe upon his 'beardless philosopher;' because it ought to be admitted that the progress of science and the growth of criticism do make new difficulties, and it no more argues self-conceit on the part of a young man in these days to say that he can find no satisfactory answer to these in the older apologists, than it does when a young man in these days says that he can see no difficulty in travelling from Cambridge to London in an hour and a half, or in sending up a message in two minutes, or in any of the like results of modern practical science, at which Pascal, Butler, Bacon, or Leibnitz, would have expressed reasonable doubt. In fact, it ought to be admitted that each age and state of human thought has its own peculiar difficulties, and it would be strange if an active age like our

¹ *Reason and Faith; their Claims and Conflicts*. Reprinted from the Edinburgh Review. By Henry Rogers. Second Edition, pp. 62—65.

own had not its full complement. Nevertheless, beyond doubt, the extract given above does point to a real disease ; and therefore it is, that I have ventured to request every young reader to try whether he can read it without wincing, before he claims any of the sympathy spoken of in the text.

NOTE 5.

Mr Greg commences his work, *The Creed of Christendom*, with this paragraph—"When an inquirer, brought up in the popular Theology of England, questions his teachers as to the foundations and evidence of the doctrines he has imbibed, he is referred at once to the Bible as the source and proof of all : 'The Bible, and the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants.' The Bible, he is told, is a sacred book of reference and unquestionable authority, being the production of writers directly inspired by God to teach us truth,—being, in the ordinary phrase, *The Word of God*. This view of the Bible he finds to be universal among all religious sects, and nearly all religious teachers ; all, at least, of whom, in this country, he is likely to hear. This belief in the Inspiration of the Scriptures (Θεοπνευστία) is, indeed, stated with some slight variations by modern divines ; some affirming that every statement and word was immediately dictated from on high : these are the advocates of *Plenary*, or *Verbal Inspiration* ; others merely holding that the Scriptural writers were divinely informed and authorized teachers of truth, and narrators of fact, thoroughly imbued with, and guided by, the Spirit of God, but that the words, the earthly form in which they clothed the ideas, were their own. These are the believers in the *Essential Inspiration* of the Bible."

It is with reference to this view of the foundation of Christian truth that I have said in the Lecture, that the Church Catechism does *not* commence with such a principle as that "the Bible, and the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants ;" indeed, I cannot fancy any method much more unfortunate, than to base the Christian religion upon this dictum of Chillingworth ; I do not deny that many persons would adopt the motto, and glory in it, and that what Mr Greg says of the answer which would be made by religious teachers in England is true as regards many of them, but I do deny that this is the ground taken by the Church, and I appeal to her formularies

for the truth of what I say. The manner in which the Scriptures are to be regarded is of course an important and interesting question, and I have devoted Lectures V. and VI. to the consideration of it, but it is by no means the first question, and I pity from my heart any person who is led to think, that his tenure of the Apostles' Creed and of his allegiance to Christ depend upon his competence to solve all knotty questions, which may be propounded, concerning the history, structure, and inspiration of Holy Scripture.

The manner in which Chillingworth's famous dictum has been magnified into something like an article of faith, is very curious; it is one of those sayings, which, taken in a certain light, expresses an important truth, and, taken absolutely, expresses a downright falsehood. The sense in which it is true I take to be this, that we, as Protestants against certain corruptions of the Church of Rome, assert it to be unlawful on her part to make any addition to those articles of faith which can be proved from Holy Scripture; we maintain, in fact, the sufficiency and completeness of the faith once delivered to the saints, and protest against the notion of new articles being added; for example, we may rightly, upon this principle, protest against the doctrine of the immaculate conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, lately canonized with so much pomp at Rome. But, if we put the points of dispute between Rome and ourselves out of view, and take the dictum concerning the Bible as expressing that we begin and end our religious system with the Bible, that we hold, for instance, that the study of the Bible, and the Bible only, is the right road of Christian knowledge, we certainly turn our backs upon the Church of England, and (as I believe) run into a most mischievous error. For why should we forget that we have the Church, and her Ministers, and her Sacraments, and the Creeds, and history, both ecclesiastical and civil, and the fact of a large and ever enlarging Christendom, and the evidence of the effects of Christ's coming upon the world, and the like, all testifying to Christ?—testimonies these, which would not cease to be testimonies, even if we had no Scriptures. The Bible, in fact, is the greatest and the most influential source of Christian knowledge; but when we profess our faith as Christians, we do not say, "I believe in the Bible," but "I believe in God the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord, and in the Holy Ghost."

NOTE 6.

The one instance of the occurrence of the word atonement in the English version of the New Testament, is in Rom. v. 11, and it seems difficult to understand why it should have been used here, for the use of the word destroys for English readers the close connexion which exists between verse 11 and the preceding verse, in which the verb cognate to the substantive rendered *atonement* occurs twice. The Greek runs thus:—
 εἰ γὰρ ἐχθροὶ ὄντες καταλλάγημεν τῷ Θεῷ διὰ τοῦ θανάτου τοῦ
 υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ, πολλῶ μαῖλλον καταλλαγέμεθα σωθησόμεθα ἐν τῇ
 ζωῇ αὐτοῦ· οὐ μόνον δὲ, ἀλλὰ καὶ καυχώμενοι ἐν τῷ Θεῷ διὰ τοῦ
 Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, δι' οὗ νῦν τὴν καταλλαγὴν ἐλάβομεν.
 And the rendering would have been more pointed if it had run accordingly: “For if, when we were enemies, we were *reconciled* to God by the death of His Son, much more, being *reconciled*, we shall be saved by His life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom we have now received *reconciliation*.” The word καταλλαγή is translated by *reconciling* in Romans xi. 15, and by *reconciliation* in 2 Cor. v. 18, 19. Probably the word *atonement* was used by the translators as a synonyme, which it easily might be, if they regarded it as equivalent to an at-one-ment, or a making of two parties to be at one, a derivation which, though deemed by some authorities incorrect, appears to be well supported. Thus in his little work on *The Study of Words*, Mr Trench gives the direction—“Tell them that *atonement* means *at-one-ment*—the setting at one of those who were at twain before, namely, God and man, and they will attach to the word a definite meaning, which perhaps it no way else would have had for them¹.” And the same derivation is given in Richardson’s Dictionary, and in some others. The whole truth of the matter would perhaps be expressed by saying, that *atonement* in Scripture implies reconciliation, and has a particular reference to the manner in which reconciliation is procured,—that is, through the redemptive work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The word atonement is frequently used, as every one knows, in the Old Testament, but the word used in the LXX to express it is not καταλλαγή as in Rom. v. 11. Thus in Levit. xvii. 11, we have in the English version, “It is the blood that

¹ *Study of Words*, p. 143. (First Edition.) See also Thomson’s *Bampton Lectures*. Note 1.

maketh an atonement for the soul," and in the LXX, τὸ γὰρ αἷμα αὐτοῦ ἀντὶ ψυχῆς ἐξιλάσεται : and so in many other passages. The word ἱλασμός (propitiatio, expiatio, id quod vim expiandi habet, *Schleusner* : εὐμένεια, συγχώρησις, διαλλαγή, καταλλαγή, *Hesych* :) occurs twice in the New Testament ; 1 John ii. 2, αὐτὸς ἱλασμός ἐστι περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world : and again, 1 John iv. 10, ἀπέστειλε τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἱλασ- μόν sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. The cognate verb occurs in Heb. ii. 17, where it is rendered, to make reconciliation, and in S. Luke xviii. 13, where we have the words, God be merciful to me a sinner, ἱλάσθητί μοι τῷ ἁμαρτω- λῷ. Hence it would seem, that these words imply generally pardon and reconciliation, and also particularly those means whereby, under the old covenant, pardon and reconciliation could be obtained.

Considering the frequent use of the term *atonement* in recent times, I confess that it was to me a very striking fact, that I was unable to find the word in any of the formularies of the Church. I observe also that it does not occur in either Pearson, Hooker, or Barrow, if the indices appended to the editions which I have in use may be trusted.

NOTE 7.

The question of the ground of the acceptance of Abel's offering and the rejection of that of Cain, is one of great difficulty, and upon which, therefore, I would not wish to give too positive an opinion. The view given in the passage, to which this note is appended, seems to me the most reasonable, and I confess there appears to me to be a great difficulty in admitting the only difference between the two sacrifices to have consisted in the moral feelings of the two brothers ; a view supported by Mr Maurice, in the first of his sermons on *The Doctrine of Sacrifice*, and on behalf of which the following passage may be quoted from S. Augustine :—

"Non fuit charitas in Cain ; et nisi esset charitas in Abel, non acciperet Deus sacrificium ejus. Cum enim ambo obtulissent, ille de fructibus terræ, ille de fetibus ovium ; quid putatis, fratres, quia Deus fructus terræ neglexit, et fetus ovium dilexit ? Non intendit Deus ad manus ; sed in corde vidit : et quem vidit

cum charitate offerre, ipsius sacrificium respexit; quem vidit cum invidiâ offerre, ab ipsius sacrificio oculos avertit¹."

For a discussion of the subject, I may refer to Outram, *De Sacrificiis*, Diss. I. cap. i. Magee, Notes LX. LXI. LXII. LXIII. and the passages to which they refer. Davison's *Inquiry into the Origin and Intent of Primitive Sacrifice*, p. 127. Faber, on *Expiatory Sacrifice*, § iii. Chap. I.

NOTE 8.

Mr F. W. Newman says, in his chapter on "Hopes concerning a Future Life," in *The Soul*:—

... "Confidence thus there is none, and Aspiration is her highest state. But then, there is herein nothing whatever to distress her: no cloud of grief crosses the area of her vision, as she gazes upward; for if her Lord, infinite in love and wisdom, sees that it cannot be, she herself could not wish it. . . .

"The general conclusion to which I personally come is, that the state of *aspiration* to which alone I attain, is perhaps the very best thing for me, until some other conditions of soul are fulfilled, in which as yet I am deficient."

In referring to this chapter of *The Soul*, I cannot but express my surprise at a note appended by the author. "Christians," he says, "have added an argument of their own for a Future State, but unfortunately one that cannot bring personal comfort or assurance. A Future State (it seems) is requisite to redress the inequalities of this life. And can I go to the Supreme Judge, and tell Him that I deserve more happiness than He has granted me in this life? Whither is the logician's common sense or self-knowledge gone?" To the former question I should reply, Certainly not, if you are a Christian; and to the latter, Whither is the spiritualist's candour gone, when he can thus represent that argument for a future state which so continually forces itself upon the minds of men, whether Christians or not, who contemplate the various anomalies of this present world and yet believe that a Righteous Creator is the Governor of it? I observe that amongst other famous men, who would come under Mr Newman's lash, would be Leibnitz, who, having quoted a passage from Luther, in which he

¹ In *Epist. Joan.* Tract. v.

says that the inequality of things in this present life cannot be explained, adds, "Mais il faut voir un peu après, qu'il ne l'entend que de ceux qui ignorent l'autre vie¹."

I find that Mr Newman's note, upon which I have commented, is noticed also in the section on "A Future Life" in *The Eclipse of Faith*; the author says: "As to the Christian, though he feels that he could not, and dare not, go to the divine tribunal with any such absurd plea as Mr Newman is pleased to put into his mouth,—though he cannot impeach the divine goodness,—he nevertheless feels that that goodness, if this scene be all, is open to very grievous impeachment in relation to millions who have suffered much, and done *no* wrong, and to multitudes more who have inflicted infinite wrong, and suffered next to nothing; and they would fain, if they could, get over difficulties which Mr Newman chooses, from the mere exigencies of his theology, to represent as no difficulties at all."

If any one wished to put in a clear point of view, the miserable exchange which we should make by the substitution of this modern spiritualism for the Catholic faith, he could hardly do better than contrast Mr Newman's *aspirations* with the sentences of the Creed, "I *believe* in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting."

NOTE 9.

I intended in this note to have made a reference to the pages in Coleridge's *Aids to Reflection*, in which he discusses the doctrine of Redemption; but as I fear that some of my readers might be deterred from consulting the book, in consequence of the apprehension of being lost in some bottomless metaphysics, I will quote several passages which seem to me to contain the pith of the argument, and commend them to the attention of those whose minds are directed to this important and necessarily mysterious question. And here I cannot but express my regret, that the late Dr Mill² should have given the weight of his justly respected name in depreciation of the value of this book: portions of it may be open to criticism, and may involve erroneous opinions or conclusions, but viewed in the light in which it professes to stand, namely, as a collection

¹ *Théodicée*, § 67, p. 498. (Erdmann's Edition.)

² University Sermons, 1844, p. 152.

of *aids* to the mind, which desires or feels itself driven to reflect upon the doctrines of our holy religion, I do not know any book which is in my opinion more valuable; and I believe that there are many, who from personal experience are able to testify to its worth. Certainly the extracts which follow are free from the fault, so frequently alleged against Coleridge, of obscurity; right or wrong, their meaning is clearly expressed; and indeed it is certainly true, that, although in his more abstruse speculations, Coleridge not unfrequently gets into depths where few can follow him, and where I would allow, for argument's sake, that he might possibly not even himself know his whereabouts, still no man ever possessed a more remarkable faculty of expressing himself clearly upon difficult subjects, and the accuracy with which he uses language (a great constituent of clearness of style) has few parallels amongst authors. With these prefatory remarks, I give the following passages, which are part of an article in the *Aids to Reflection*, given in the form of a commentary upon a passage from Field:—

“Forgiveness of sin, the abolition of guilt, through the redemptive power of Christ's love, and of His perfect obedience during His voluntary assumption of humanity, is expressed, on account of the resemblance of the consequences in both cases, by the payment of a debt for another, which debt the payer had not Himself incurred. Now the impropriation of this metaphor—(that is, the taking it literally)—by transferring the sameness from the consequents to the antecedents, or inferring the identity of the causes from a resemblance in the effects,—this is the point on which I am at issue: and the view or scheme of redemption grounded on this confusion I believe to be altogether un-Scriptural.

“Indeed, I know not in what other instance I could better exemplify the species of sophistry [before] noticed as the Aristotelian *μετάβασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος*, or clandestine passing over into a diverse kind. The purpose of a metaphor is to illustrate a something less known by a partial identification of it by some other thing better understood, or at least more familiar. Now the article of redemption may be considered in a twofold relation—in relation to the antecedent, that is, the Redeemer's act, as the efficient cause and condition of redemption; and in relation to the consequent, that is, the effects in

and for the redeemed. Now it is the latter relation, in which the subject is treated of, set forth, expanded, and enforced by S. Paul. The mysterious act, the operative cause, is transcendent. *Factum est*: and beyond the information contained in the enunciation of the fact, it can be characterized only by the consequences. It is the consequences of the act of Redemption, which the zealous Apostle would bring home to the minds and affections both of Jews and Gentiles. Now the Apostle's opponents and gainsayers were principally of the former class. They were Jews: not only Jews unconverted, but such as had partially received the Gospel, and who, sheltering their national prejudices under the pretended authority of Christ's original Apostles and the Church in Jerusalem, set themselves up against Paul as followers of Cephas. Add too, that Paul himself was *a Hebrew of the Hebrews*; intimately versed *in the Jews' religion above many his equals in his own nation, and above measure zealous of the traditions of his fathers*. It might, therefore, have been anticipated, that his reasoning would receive its outward forms and language, that it would take its predominant colours, from his own past, and his opponents' present, habits of thinking; and that his figures, images, analogies, and references would be taken preferably from objects, opinions, events, and ritual observances ever uppermost in the imaginations of his own countrymen. And such we find them;—yet so judiciously selected, that the prominent forms, the figures of most frequent recurrence, are drawn from points of belief and practice, forms, laws, rites and customs, which then prevailed through the whole Roman world, and were common to Jew and Gentile.

“Now it would be difficult, if not impossible, to select points better suited to this purpose, as being equally familiar to all, and yet having a special interest for the Jewish converts, than those are from which the learned Apostle has drawn the four principal metaphors, by which he illustrates the blessed consequences of Christ's redemption of mankind. These are:

1. Sin offerings, sacrificial expiation.
2. Reconciliation, atonement, *καταλλαγή*.
3. Ransom from slavery, redemption, the buying back again, or being bought back.
4. Satisfaction of a creditor's claims by a payment of the debt.

To one or other of these four heads all the numerous forms and exponents of Christ's mediation in S. Paul's writings may be referred. And

the very number and variety of the words or *periphrases* used by him to express one and the same thing, furnish the strongest presumptive proof that all alike were used metaphorically."

"Respecting the redemptive act itself, and the divine agent, we know from revelation that He *was made a quickening* (*ζωοποιούν*, life-making) *Spirit*: and that in order to this it was necessary that God should be *manifested in the flesh*; that the Eternal Word, through whom the world (*κόσμος*, the order, beauty, and sustaining law of visible nature) was and is, should be made flesh, assume an humanity personally, fulfil all righteousness, and so suffer and so die for us, as in dying to conquer death for as many as should receive Him. More than this, the mode, the possibility, we are not competent to know. It is, as hath been already observed concerning the primal act of apostasy, a mystery by the necessity of the subject—a mystery, which at all events it will be time enough for us to seek and expect to understand, when we understand the mystery of our natural life, and its conjunction with mind, and will, and personal identity. Even the truths that were given to us to know, we can know only through faith in the Spirit. They are spiritual things which must be spiritually discerned. Such, however, being the means and the effects of our redemption, well might the fervent apostle associate it with whatever was eminently dear and precious to erring and afflicted mortals, and (where no expression could be commensurate, no single title be other than imperfect) seek from similitude of effect to describe the superlative boon, by successively transferring to it, as by a superior claim, the name of each several act and ordinance, habitually connected in the minds of all his hearers with feelings of joy, confidence, and gratitude."

One remark I will venture to make upon the preceding paragraphs: it might seem as though Coleridge intended to speak of sacrifices, especially Jewish sacrifices, as happening to form a convenient illustration for the purpose of illustrating the mystery of redemption, and not as ordinances which were truly, according to the counsel and foreknowledge of God, prevent types and shadows of the sacrifice and death of Christ. I do not think that this is likely to have been his meaning, but inasmuch as some of the language may seem to favour the supposition, I wish to guard myself from being considered as implicated in this to my mind imperfect view of the ancient

sacrifices.—With this qualification I commend the preceding paragraphs as containing most valuable and important thoughts, and I will now conclude my extracts with the following

“Synopsis of the constituent points in the doctrine of Redemption, in four questions, with correspondent answers.

Questions:—

Who (or What) is the	{	1. <i>Agens Causator?</i>
		2. <i>Actus Causativus?</i>
		3. <i>Effectum Causatum?</i>
		4. <i>Consequentia ab Effecto?</i>

Answers:

I. The agent and personal cause of the redemption of mankind is—the co-eternal Word and only begotten Son of the living God, incarnate, tempted, agonizing (*agonistes*, ἀγωνιζόμενος), crucified, submitting to death, resurgent, communicant of His Spirit, ascendent, and obtaining for His church the descent and communion of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter.

II. The causative act is—a spiritual and transcendent mystery, *that passeth all understanding.*

III. The effect caused is—the being born anew: as before in the flesh to the world, so now born in the spirit to Christ.

IV. The consequences from the effect are—sanctification from sin, and liberation from the inherent and penal consequences of sin in the world to come, with all the means and processes of sanctification by the Word and the Spirit: these consequents being the same for the sinner relatively to God and His own soul, as the satisfaction of a debt for a debtor relatively to his creditor; as the sacrificial atonement made by the priest for the transgressor of the Mosaic law; as the reconciliation to an alienated parent for a son who had estranged himself from his father's house and presence; and as a redemptive ransom for a slave or captive.”

I do not know that the view of the atonement, which I have endeavoured to press as the true and Catholic view, is anywhere more powerfully enforced than in one of the “Tracts for the Times,” from the pen (I believe) of Mr Newman in the days of his giant strength, and which I may probably quote without offence, as being one which (I think) was always recognised as having done good service to the cause of truth, even in the days of the greatest storm of indignation against the Tracts, and by

those who were the most warm in their indignation. The Tract is No. 73, entitled "On the introduction of rationalistic principles into religion," and consists mainly of a review of "Erskine's Internal Evidence," and "Abbott's Corner Stone." I will venture to quote a few sentences.

"Viewed in itself," says the writer, "Christ's death is, we believe, a sacrifice acting in some unknown way for the expiation of human sin; but Mr Erskine views it, (as indeed it may well be viewed, but exclusively as it should not be viewed,) as a mark and pledge of God's love to us, which it would be, though it were not an expiation—even though Christ's incarnation issued in nothing more than His preaching to the world and sealing His doctrines with His blood, it would be a great sign of His love, and a *pledge* now of our receiving blessings through Him; for why should He die, except He meant to be merciful to us? but this would not involve the necessity of an expiation, &c."

This and much more to the like effect brings out the point with singular force, that it is the tendency of the rationalistic systems of the age to bring down the effects of the death of our Lord to the level of what we can understand, or to limit them to such as can be seen to flow from the death as a source, according to natural principles; the Catholic doctrine asserts more than this, and I have wished to show that upon the presumption of our blessed Lord's Divine nature, it is not only credible that results would flow from His human death, which cannot be connected with it as a cause by any process of the human understanding, but that it is scarcely possible to believe the contrary. These results I call transcendent; and I submit that although it is impossible in the nature of things to predict the character of these results, it is equally impossible to believe, that such an event should be capable of being measured in all its length and breadth by any human measuring rod; to bring down the death of Christ to the human understanding would be virtually to bring Christ Himself down to the level of men; the death of Christ must have in it something of the mystery and the infinity of Godhead.¹

¹ I will take this opportunity of saying, that, at the time of writing this Lecture, I had not had an opportunity of reading Mr. Thomson's *Bampton Lectures*. I would refer to that work, as combining, in an admirable manner, piety, thought and learning.

NOTE 10.

The passages of Scripture quoted as implying the doctrine of the atonement are taken from Bishop Butler's chapter on "the Appointment of a Mediator and Redeemer," being Part ii. Chap. 5. of the Analogy. I have adopted the passages as I found them there, partly because they are as appropriate as any that can be found in Scripture, partly because I wished to make a distinct reference to that chapter, and to acknowledge my obligations to it. Indeed, after having composed my lecture, I was astonished to find, how much I had been indebted unconsciously to the expression of Bishop Butler's views; the reader may attribute as much to Butler as he pleases; all that I would desire to do, as respects the chapter on the appointment of a Mediator and Redeemer, is this, to exhibit the arguments from the point of view belonging to my course of Lectures, or rather to select so much as is available for my purpose and exhibit that.

I trust that some of my readers will not feel ungrateful to me for directing their attention to the following passages of Butler's chapter:—

"In this darkness, or this light of nature, call it which you please, revelation comes in; confirms every doubting fear, which could enter into the heart of man, concerning the future unprevented consequences of wickedness; supposes the world to be in a state of ruin (a supposition which seems the very ground of the Christian dispensation, and which, if not provable by reason, yet is in no wise contrary to it); teaches us too, that the rules of Divine government are such, as not to admit of pardon immediately and directly upon repentance, or by the sole efficacy of it: but then teaches at the same time, what nature might possibly have hoped, that the moral government of the universe was not so rigid, but that there was room for an interposition, to avert the fatal consequences of vice; which therefore, by this means, does admit of pardon. Revelation teaches us, that the unknown laws of God's more general government, no less than the particular laws by which we experience He governs us at present, are compassionate as well as good in the more general notion of goodness: and that He hath successfully provided, that there should be an interposition

to prevent the destruction of human kind; whatever that destruction unprevented would have been. *God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth*, not to be sure, in a speculative, but in a practical sense, *that whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish*: gave His Son in the same way of goodness to the world, as He affords particular persons the friendly assistance of their fellow-creatures; when, without it, their temporal ruin would be the certain consequence of their follies: in the same way of goodness, I say; though in a transcendent, and infinitely higher degree. And the Son of God *loved us and gave Himself for us*, with a love which He Himself compares to that of human friendship: though, in this case, all comparisons must fall infinitely short of the thing intended to be illustrated by them. He interposed in such manner as was necessary and effectual to prevent that execution of justice upon sinners, which God had appointed should otherwise have been executed upon them: or in such a manner as to prevent that punishment from actually following, which, according to the general laws of Divine government, must have followed the sins of the world, had it not been for such interposition."

"It cannot," adds Bishop Butler, in a note appended to the preceding paragraph,—*"it cannot, I suppose, be imagined even by the most cursory reader, that it is, in any sort, affirmed or implied in anything said in this chapter, that none can have the benefit of the general redemption, but such as have the advantage of being made acquainted with it in the present life. But it may be needful to mention, that several questions, which have been brought into the subject before us, and determined, are not in the least entered into here: questions which have been, I fear, rashly determined, and perhaps with equal rashness contrary ways. For instance, whether God could have saved the world by other means than the death of Christ, consistently with the general laws of His government. And had not Christ come into the world, what would have been the future condition of the better sort of men; those just persons over the face of the earth, for whom, Manasses in his prayer asserts, repentance was not appointed. The meaning of the first of these questions is greatly ambiguous: and neither of them can be properly answered without going upon that infinitely absurd supposition, that we know the whole of the case. And perhaps*

the very inquiry, *What would have followed, if God had not done as He has*, may have in it some very great impropriety; and ought not to be carried on any further than is necessary to help our partial and inadequate conceptions of things."

O that the wisdom of these words of Butler could be infused into the minds of all, who undertake to handle sacred subjects!

I must ask the reader to peruse another passage.

"The particular manner in which Christ interposed in the redemption of the world, or His office as *Mediator*, in the largest sense, *between God and man*, is thus represented to us in the Scripture. *He is the light of the world*; the revealer of the will of God in the most eminent sense. He is a propitiatory sacrifice; *the Lamb of God*: and, as He voluntarily offered Himself up, He is styled our High Priest. And, which seems of peculiar weight, He is described beforehand in the Old Testament, under the same characters of a priest, and an expiatory victim. And whereas it is stated, that all this is merely by way of allusion to the sacrifices of the Mosaic Law, the Apostle on the contrary affirms, that *the Law was a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things*; and that *the priests that offer gifts according to the Law—serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God, when he was about to make the tabernacle. For see, saith He, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount*: i. e. the Levitical priesthood was a shadow of the priesthood of Christ; in like manner as the tabernacle made by Moses was according to that shewed him in the mount. The priesthood of Christ, and the tabernacle in the mount, were the originals: of the former of which the Levitical priesthood was a type; and of the latter the tabernacle made by Moses was a copy. The doctrine of this Epistle then plainly is, that the legal sacrifices were allusions to the great and final atonement to be made by the blood of Christ; and not that this was an allusion to those. Nor can anything be more express or determinate than the following passage, *It is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin. Wherefore when He cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice, and offering, i. e. of bulls and of goats, Thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared me. Lo, I come to do thy will, O God—by which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*

And to add one passage more of the like kind: *Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time, without sin; i. e. without bearing sin, as He did at His first coming, by bearing an offering for it; without having our iniquities again laid upon Him, without being any more a sin-offering: unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin, unto salvation.* Nor do the inspired writers at all confine themselves to this manner of speaking concerning the satisfaction of Christ; but declare an efficacy in what He did and suffered for us, additional to and beyond mere instruction, example, and government, in great variety of expression: *that Jesus should die for that nation, the Jews: and not for that nation only, but that also, plainly by the efficacy of His death, He should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad: that He suffered for sins, the just for the unjust: that He gave His life, Himself, a ransom: that we are bought, bought with a price: that He redeemed us with His blood; redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: that He is our advocate, intercessor, and propitiation: that He was made perfect, or consummate, through sufferings: and being thus made perfect, He became the author of salvation: that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself; by the death of His Son, by the cross; not imputing their trespasses unto them: and lastly, that through death He destroyed him that had the power of death. Christ then having thus humbled Himself, and become obedient to death, even the death of the cross; God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name, which is above every name: hath given all things into His hands: hath committed all judgment unto Him; that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. For, worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and in the earth, heard I, saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him, that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."*

Then, speaking of the sacrifice of Christ, the same author writes:—

"How and in what particular way it had this efficacy, there are not wanting persons who have endeavoured to explain: but I do not find that the Scripture has explained it. . . . And if the

Scripture has, as surely it has, left this matter of the satisfaction of Christ, mysterious, left somewhat in it unrevealed, all conjectures about it must be, if not evidently absurd, yet at least uncertain. Nor has any one reason to complain for want of further information, unless he can shew his claim to it."

Again:—

"To object against the expediency or usefulness of particular things, revealed to have been done or suffered by Him, because we do not see how they are conducive to those ends, is highly absurd. Yet nothing is more common to be met with, than this absurdity. But if it be acknowledged beforehand, that we are not judges in the case, it is evident that no objection can, with any shadow of reason, be urged against any particular part of Christ's mediatorial office revealed in Scripture, till it can be shown positively not to be requisite or conducive to the ends proposed to be accomplished; or that it is in itself unreasonable."

Lastly:—

"Though it is highly right, and the most pious exercise of our understanding, to inquire with due reverence into the ends and reasons of God's dispensations: yet when those reasons are concealed, to argue from our ignorance, that such dispensations cannot be from God, is infinitely absurd. The presumption of this kind of objections seems almost lost in the folly of them. . . . Let reason be kept to: and if any part of the Scripture account of the redemption of the world by Christ can be shewn to be really contrary to it, let the Scripture, in the name of God, be given up: but let not such poor creatures as we go on objecting against an infinite scheme, that we do not see the necessity or usefulness of all its parts, and call this reasoning."

The chapter of the Analogy, from which the above extracts are made, appears to me second to none in weight and wisdom; but, like other parts of that wonderful book, it seems to suffer from the fact of its conclusions being contemplated from that point of view which is peculiar to the whole, and which in reality constitutes its great value. This is paradoxical only in appearance; for it was highly desirable that the objections made to revelation should be viewed from the ground of human weakness and ignorance, and that men should be taught how much further their objections went than they imagined, and

that objections to the revealed will of God frequently involved a denial of the admitted laws of the natural world; and Bishop Butler did inestimable service to mankind by putting this subject upon a foundation which has never yet been shaken. But the very conditions of the problem have necessitated a mode of treatment, which somewhat jars on the feelings of a Christian, who is desirous of regarding the subject from the point of view which the Creeds of the Church give him; the chapters seem to lack that warm light, which is poured upon Christian mysteries from the cross of Christ, regarded as the centre of our affections and love.

NOTE 11.

The hero of Mr Froude's *Nemesis of Faith* is represented as saying: "To suppose that by our disobedience we have taken something away from God, in the loss of which He suffers, for which He requires satisfaction, and that this satisfaction has been made to Him by the cross sacrifice, (as if doing wrong were incurring a debt to Him, which somehow must be paid, though it matters not by whom,) is so infinitely derogatory to His majesty, to every idea which I can form of His nature, that to believe it in any such sense as this confounds and overwhelms me. In the strength of my own soul, for myself, at least, I would say boldly, rather let me bear the consequences of my own acts myself, even if it be eternal vengeance, and God requires it, than allow the shadow of my sin to fall upon the innocent." The fallacies of such views are numerous, and will, as I trust, be partly made manifest by the Lecture to which this note is appended; but I am tempted here to ask, whether the fallacy of the last sentence is not made very obvious by Butler's line of reasoning from the analogy of God's dealings in the ordinary course of nature and history? Is it not remarkable how thoroughly we are indebted for the chief blessings we enjoy to the self-sacrifice of others? If we are indebted for the Gospel to the labours and sufferings of the Apostles, we are no less indebted for freedom from Roman bondage to the blood of the martyrs of the sixteenth century, and for constitutional government to the sufferings of our forefathers in the seventeenth, and for deliverance from the great French enemy of our country to the death of Nelson and many other heroes: might

we not as consistently refuse the blessings gained for us in this way, as speak of the gifts to us by God through Jesus Christ in the manner adopted in the passage just quoted? The great law, which we may see verified in every day's experience, is, that evil is subdued, and blessings obtained for mankind, by the self-sacrifice of some amongst the number, and seldom in any other way; and this law would seem to be the reflexion of that, according to which the victory over evil was gained for the whole race by the self-denying humiliation of Him, who had voluntarily taken the nature of the race upon Himself.

In using the expression, "*Who preaches such doctrines as those which are thus reprobated?*" I do not intend to deny, that such doctrines may be preached by some persons, and in some places; but I wish to intimate, that any view of the atonement, which represents Almighty God as delighting in suffering, requiring a sacrifice to appease a mere feeling of vengeance, and the like, is so manifestly contrary to truth, that it is hardly to be treated as a doctrine worthy of serious refutation.

NOTE 12.

The thing here objected to is not the use of such words as *vicarious*, *satisfaction*, *imputed righteousness*, and the like, provided it be understood that they are used in a proper scriptural sense; but it seems to me, that the words are not unfrequently used in a manner open to objection, and likely to bring contempt upon the great doctrine of human redemption, and that this is the case when it is implied by them, that the punishment of human sin has been taken away by the sufferings of Christ, according to a law which the human understanding can enunciate. That Christ suffered for sins is a scriptural truth; but that He suffered the punishment of sins, in such a manner, that it is obviously contrary to the justice of God to require from believers in Him the penalty of their transgressions, I think he would be a bold man who would affirm. It is very easy to ask questions concerning the effects of the Lord's passion, but it is generally difficult to answer them: any one who wishes to see an attempt to answer almost every conceivable question, can consult Thomas Aquinas, *Summ. Theol.* P. III. Quæst. XLVI—L.

NOTE 13.

The reader will remember Paley's chapter, "Of the History of the Resurrection," in the *Evidences of Christianity*. He is, of course, looking at the miracle from quite a different point of view, but he brings out with his usual clearness that unique character of it, upon which I have remarked. He says, "It is not that, as a miracle, the Resurrection ought to be accounted a more decisive proof of supernatural agency than other miracles are; it is not that, as it stands in the Gospels, it is better attested than some others; it is not, for either of these reasons, that more weight belongs to it than to other miracles, but for the following, that it is completely certain that the Apostles of Christ, and the first teachers of Christianity, asserted the fact. And this would have been certain, if the four Gospels had been lost, or never written," &c. &c.

The distinction between the Resurrection and other miracles, as regards the manner in which they enter into the Apostolic writings, ought also to be noticed. "Out of the six-and-twenty constituents of the Canon," observes the author of *The Restoration of Belief*, "fourteen are (as I here presume to call them,) nonsupernatural, saving only that one constant element, expressed or implied in every Christian writing,—the Resurrection of Christ."¹

I trust that no ingenious critic will endeavour to make it appear, from anything said in the paragraph to which this note is appended, that the miracles of our blessed Lord have been disparaged by the distinction drawn between them and the peculiar miracle of the Resurrection.

NOTE 14.

The force of the argument here produced is singularly neglected by Strauss, who, in his "Criteria, by which to distinguish the unhistorical in the Gospel narrative," observes, "Another law which controls the course of events is the law of succession, in accordance with which all occurrences, not excepting the most violent convulsions and the most rapid changes, follow

in a certain order of sequence of increase and decrease. If, therefore, we are told of a celebrated individual, that He attracted at His birth and during His childhood that attention which He excited in His manhood; that His followers, at a single glance, recognised Him as being all that He actually was,"—which, by the way, the Gospels never do say, but quite the contrary,—“*if the transition from the deepest despondency to the most ardent enthusiasm after His death is represented as the work of a single hour; we must feel more than doubtful, whether it is a real history which lies before us.*”

Neander, on the other hand, gives full weight to the argument, writing thus: “The death of Christ annihilated at a stroke the Messianic expectations of the Apostles. Their dejection was complete. But if, of all that they had hoped, *nothing* was ever realised, this dejection could not have passed away. It is true, we may suppose it abstractly possible, that, after the first consternation was over, the deep, spiritual impression which Christ had made might have revived, and operated more powerfully, and even more purely, now that they could no longer see Him with their bodily eyes. But this view could not arise except along with the recognition of a historical Christ, as the personal ground and cause of such a new spiritual creation; without the pre-supposition of such a Christ there is no possible foundation on which to conceive of such after-workings.

“And even *with* it, we cannot explain (not bare conceivable possibilities, but) the actual state of the case, namely, the dejection of the Apostles at *first*, and what they were and did *afterwards*. There must be some intermediate historical fact to explain the transition; *something* must have occurred to revive, with new power, the almost effaced impression; to bring back the flow of their faith which had so far ebbed away. The re-appearance, then, of Christ among His disciples is a connecting link in the chain of events which cannot possibly be spared.”¹

I observe that the same kind of argument is used by Mr Frere, in his *Testimony of the Holy Spirit to the Incarnation*, with reference to the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. He says², “In the later chapters of the Gospels, more especially of the fourth Gospel, we have proof sufficient,

¹ Quoted from the American Translation of Neander's *Life of Christ*.

² Page 48.

that, at the time subsequent to the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Christ, the Apostles were so disheartened, as to be altogether unfitted for undertaking the task, which (as their Lord told them) lay before them. In the Acts, from the third chapter onwards, we have overwhelming evidence of their whole temper and spirit having been changed. . . . It is clear then that, in the interval between the two periods, in which they shewed themselves in such different characters, *something* must have taken place. The second chapter of the Acts tells us *what* that something was. . . .” I confess that, having regard to the account given of the state of the Apostles’ minds after the Ascension, and the account of their doings in Acts i. I do not perceive the cogency of this argument as applied to the Pentecostal outpouring of the Spirit: with regard to the Resurrection, it seems to me to be one the force of which it is very difficult to evade.

NOTE 15.

The name of Neander is sufficient to remind the reader, that if Germany has supplied writers inimical to the Christian faith, she has also supplied some of its strongest champions. We do great injury to the cause of the truth by speaking indiscriminately of the German school of divines, as though the whole intellect of that learned nation were arrayed against Christ; it is not without reason that Mr Morell remarks, “Were some well-meaning, narrow-minded Lutheran to take the works of Cudworth, Jeremy Taylor, and Henry More,—were he to add those of Collins, Chubb, and Shaftesbury,—were he next to point out the Puritanical theology of the old Calvinistic school,—were he then to come down to modern times, and heap together Dr Pusey, Sidney Smith, Baptist Noel, Chalmers, Carlyle, Robert Owen, James Martineau, and Archbishop Whateley, and stamp all these with the names of Anglicism and Neology, he would not be one atom more unreasonable in his procedure, or link together phenomena one atom more heterogeneous, than is perpetually done by those who throw the German theologians and philosophical speculators together into one generalisation, and characterise their systems by one single, and that a national, epithet.”¹

¹ *Philosophy of Religion*. Preface, p. 8.

NOTE 16.

It can hardly be necessary to refer the reader to Mr. Trench's discussion of the character of miracles and their relation to nature, in chapter II. of the introduction to his *Notes on the Miracles*.

NOTE 17.

In his chapter entitled "The Assaults on the Miracles," Mr. Trench has distinguished seven classes,—the Jewish, the Heathen, the Pantheistic, the Sceptical, the Miracles only relatively miraculous, the Rationalistic, and the Historico-critical. Of these the first two did not come within the scope of my Lecture, as not having any vitality in the present day. Of the remaining five I have omitted the Pantheistic and the Relatively Miraculous views, with which the names of Spinoza and Schleiermacher have been respectively associated; but to both I believe that the remark made in the Lecture is applicable, namely, that the axiom of the impossibility of a miracle was at the foundation of them. Certainly this is the case with regard to Spinoza, whose great principle is that nature is the exhibition of the power and will of God, and that consequently any event which is contrary to nature is contrary to God. "Si quid in naturâ contingeret, quod ejus universalibus legibus repugnaret, id decreto et intellectui et naturæ divinæ necessario etiam repugnaret; aut si quis statueret Deum aliquid contra leges naturæ agere, is simul etiam cogeretur statuere, Deum contra suam naturam agere, quo nihil absurdius."¹ Against those who view nature as distinct from God, that is, who view nature as a machine put in motion by God, and a miracle as an interruption of this machine, the reasoning seems to be good; but it ceases to be conclusive, as soon as it is suggested, that the course of nature as we witness it, though it may not be regarded as a machine independent of God, may be as little assumed to be the complete exponent of the power and will of God: they, against whom Spinoza's view is of force, are in fact those described by himself, who hold, "Deum tamdiu nihil agere, quamdiu natura solito ordine agit, et contra, potentiam naturæ et causas naturales tamdiu esse,

¹ *Tractat. Theolog. Polit.* Cap. vi.

otiosas, quamdiu Deus agit,"—a mode of regarding the world, which I fear has not yet quite fallen into desuetude, and the maintaining of which gives a great advantage to the opponents of miracles.

Schleiermacher's view of miracles, though to my own mind quite incompatible with the reception of the Gospel revelation, is deeply interesting, when it is considered that the holding of such a view was not to him a bar to the most earnest faith in Christ. I am in no way pledging myself to any opinions which Schleiermacher may have held, but that such a mind as his should have been amongst those, which acknowledge the wisdom and redemptive work of Jesus Christ, notwithstanding his views concerning the miracles, appears to me to be a witness to the power of the Gospel of a very valuable kind.¹

NOTE 18.

Hume says, "A miracle is a violation of the laws of nature; and as a firm and unalterable experience has established these laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as entire as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined . . . There must, therefore, be an uniform experience against any miraculous event, otherwise the event would not merit that appellation. And as an uniform experience amounts to a proof, there is here a direct and full *proof*, from the nature of the fact, against the existence of any miracle; nor can such a proof be destroyed, or the miracle rendered credible, by an opposite proof which is superior."² Coleridge somewhere (I think) expresses his compassion for a people with whom Hume passes for profound, and certainly one would have supposed the sophistry of the preceding passage to be sufficiently transparent. Paley, as remarked by Chalmers, (who, in his *Evidences*, endeavours to supply the defect,) does not deal with the fundamental error of Hume's view, but points out its failure in a particular case.

In a note Hume adds: "A miracle may be accurately defined, *a transgression of a law of nature by a particular volition*

¹ See *Reminiscences of Schleiermacher*, by Dr. Lücke. There is an English translation, prefixed to Schleiermacher's *Brief Outline of the Study of Theology*. (Clark, Edinburgh.)

² *Essay On Miracles*.

of the Deity, or by the interposition of some invisible agent;" concerning which, see what is said in the preceding note of the cases to which Spinoza's objections are applicable.

NOTE 19.

Strauss thus describes the rise of Rationalism: "In the purely human explanation of the Bible historically, besides the method of the deists, to regard the subjects of these narratives as wicked and deceitful men, there was yet another course open: to divest these individuals of their immediate divinity, but to accord to them an undegraded humanity; not, indeed, to look upon their deeds as miraculous;—as little, on the other hand, to decry them as impositions;—but to explain their proceedings as altogether natural, yet morally irreprehensible. If the Naturalist was led by his special enmity to the Christianity of the Church to the former explanation, the Rationalist, anxious, on the contrary, to remain within the pale of the Church, was attracted towards the latter."¹

On the strict definition of the term Rationalism as used in Germany, see the Introduction to Rose's *State of Protestantism in Germany*.

NOTE 20.

Strauss tells us plainly, that "no just notion of history is possible, without a perception of the inviolability of the chain of finite causes, and of the impossibility of miracles. This perception, which is wanting to so many minds of our own day, was still more deficient in Palestine, and, indeed, throughout the Roman Empire."²

Dr. Mill observes, "The principle to which, amidst all inconsistencies of his speculation on other points, Strauss adheres constantly and invariably, is, that the phenomena of Christianity must be explained in some manner without the admission of a miracle. . . . *The miracle is impossible*—is an axiom that stands with him above all criticism, and all considerations of testimony."³

¹ *Leben Jesu*. Vol. I. p. 15. (Eng. Transl.)

² *Leben Jesu*. Introd. § 13.

³ Mill *On the Attempted Application of Pantheistic Principles to the Theory and Historic Criticism of the Gospel*, p. 130.

Strauss thus contrasts his own method with those of the Deists and Rationalists,—“As both the natural explanations of the Rationalists, and the jesting expositions of the Deists, belong to that form of opinion, which, while it sacrifices all divine meaning in the sacred records, still upholds its historical character; the mythical mode of interpretation agrees with the allegorical, in relinquishing the historical reality of the sacred narrative, in order to preserve to them an absolute inherent truth.”¹

And the process by which, according to this view, the New Testament history assumed its actual form is thus concisely described :—

“It is by no means conceivable that the early Jewish Christians, gifted with the spirit, that is, animated with religious enthusiasm, as they were, and familiar with the Old Testament, should not have been in a condition to invent symbolical scenes, such as the Temptation and other New Testament mythi. It is not, however, to be imagined that any one individual seated himself at his table to invent them out of his own head, and write them down as he would a poem: on the contrary, these narratives, like all other legends, were fashioned by degrees—by steps which can no longer be traced; gradually acquired consistency, and at length received a fixed form in our written Gospels.”²

It appears to me that the best refutation of Strauss is Strauss himself.³ Such views of the mode of the formation of the New Testament, as that just given, may look well enough, when left in all their generality; but when an attempt is made to apply them to the actual phenomena of the case, they seem to break down as completely as the explanations of the school of Paulus.

NOTE 21.

“I am the better pleased with the method of reasoning here delivered, as I think it may serve to confound those dangerous

¹ *Leben Jesu*. Introd. § 12.

² *Leben Jesu*. Vol. I. p. 25.

³ The same may be said of Hennell, concerning whom Strauss says pathetically in his preface to the English Translation of the *Leben Jesu*: “Qui (i. e. Britanni) si suum Hennellium non audiverunt, de iisdem rebus cum Britannis Britannicè agentem, quomodo audient, si quis Germanus surget?”

friends, or disguised enemies to the *Christian Religion*, who have undertaken to defend it by the principles of human reason. Our most holy religion is founded on *Faith*, not on reason ; and it is a sure method of exposing it, to put it to such a trial as it is by no means fitted to endure. To make this more evident, let us examine these miracles related in Scripture ; and not to lose ourselves in too wide a field, let us confine ourselves to such as we find in the *Pentateuch*.¹”

NOTE 22.

It may be worth while to examine the miracles recorded as having been wrought by the Apostles, in order that it may be seen clearly in what relation they stand to the miracles of the Lord Himself. The miracles recorded are remarkably few. I do not include in this examination circumstances really or apparently miraculous connected with the Apostolic history, such as the Pentecostal and other manifestations of the Spirit, the release of S. Peter from prison, and the like ; but only those works, which were due to the personal agency of the Apostles.

Acts III. This chapter contains the first and well-known miracle performed by S. Peter, or rather by S. Peter and S. John ; and it seems to be recorded partly as a representative miracle, that is, as a specimen and type of Apostolical wonder-works. The wonder-working words are these, “In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.” The sermon founded upon the miracle (verses 12—26) has for its aim to press the spiritual claims of Him, whose name had been powerful in restoring the lame man ; and when brought before the council, the same lesson is impressed upon the priests and rulers which had been before preached to the people : “If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole ; be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by Him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in

¹ Essay On Miracles.

any other : for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."¹ Nothing can be more complete than the history of this miracle, nor anything more evident than that the miraculous power was inherent, not in the Apostles, but in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, and that the design of the miracle was to carry away the eyes of the people, from the doers of the work, to Him in whose name it was done.

Acts v. The deaths of Ananias and Sapphira, though having the character of a sign to the Church, are not to be regarded as events having the nature of a miracle.

In verses 12—16 of this chapter we have a compendious account of a number of miracles performed by the Apostles, doubtless in the name of Jesus Christ. The expression, "They laid the sick on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them," must not be unnoticed : the action on the part of the multitude was as natural as possible ; indeed, the account carries with it the internal marks of truth. Nor is it inconceivable that the faith of persons acting thus should be rewarded ; but it is not expressly mentioned that any cures were so effected. This part of the history is, however, not sufficiently circumstantial to bear forcibly upon the point with which we are now chiefly concerned.

The deliverance recorded in verse 19, if miraculous, does yet not come into our consideration, as before explained. I am not sure that a miracle is here really intended.

Acts viii. In this chapter we have a general account of miracles and signs being done by Philip ; they are spoken of in immediate connexion with his preaching Christ to the city of Samaria (verse 5), and there can be no question that they were part and parcel of this preaching. Philip's miracles may deserve a special notice, because of their connexion with the history of Simon Magus. This Simon, being himself a sorcerer, no doubt looked upon Philip as a man superior to himself in his own line, and the words which give an account of his life after his baptism are very striking : "*He continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done.*" His conversion, such as it was, was the effect of mere

¹ Acts iv. 9—12.

wonder at Philip's power, not of the revelation to his heart, by means of Philip's wonderful works, of Him whom Philip preached. And what was the result of this miracle-born conversion?—that Simon imagined that spiritual gifts could be bought with money, and that his conversion proved to be a mere mistake. It may not be unprofitable to contrast the conversion of Simon, in this chapter, with the conversion of the Ethiopian Eunuch, also recorded in it. This latter neither demanded nor witnessed a miracle: he heard of Him “who was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and who, like a lamb dumb before his shearer, opened not His mouth;” and when Philip began at that Scripture and preached unto him Jesus, his heart opened to receive Him, whom he felt that he needed, and, being baptized in His name, “he went on his way rejoicing.”

Acts ix. In verse 40 we have a miracle wrought by S. Peter; a very great one, inasmuch as it involved the raising of one from the dead. The manner of performing it is important to be noticed: “Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed.” This miracle was not of the nature of a sign, like that of the lame man at the Beautiful Gate, but rather of a work of mercy, for the comfort of the disciples at Joppa. Hence it was, I conceive, that “Peter put them all forth,” and then he betook himself to prayer; thus owning, as distinctly as possible, his own weakness, and incapability of performing the act by his own power.

Acts xii. I do not dwell upon the deliverance of S. Peter from prison, for reasons before explained.

Acts xiii. In vers. 9–11 we have S. Paul's first miracle; it is performed with the words, “The *hand of the Lord* is upon thee;” and we read, as the result, that “the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed; being astonished *at the doctrine of the Lord.*” The effect was, therefore, not to make the deputy look upon S. Paul as a magician, but to make him believe in Jesus Christ.

Acts xiv. The miracle recorded in this chapter is worthy of attention, because it has, at first sight, the appearance of contradicting the general view which I have wished to give, but does, upon nearer examination, confirm it. S. Paul, seeing a cripple at Lystra, said to him with a loud voice, “Stand upright on thy feet;” it is mentioned incidentally, that Paul

perceived that "he had faith to be healed," thus recognising the fact, that, although he should give the word of command, yet it would not be the mere word of command, unconnected with Christ as the creating Word, which would be effective in performing the cure: however, so far as outward appearances were concerned, Paul simply gave a command, which was obeyed; "he leaped and walked." There is the appearance, then, here of a work performed by an apostle in his own name; and now note the consequences. The people immediately cried out, that "the gods were come down in the likeness of men;" they discovered that Barnabas was Jupiter, and Paul Mercurius, and they would sacrifice to them at once; and the two apostles were compelled to bestir themselves right vigorously, to prevent this sacrilegious honour being paid to them. This result, then, exhibits to us what would have probably always taken place, if it had not been made quite clear by the conduct of the apostles, that their miracles were the declarations of the power of a Name, which Name it was their business to preach.

Acts XVI. The exorcism of the Pythia may be noticed, on account of the words used by S. Paul: "I command thee in *the name of Jesus Christ* to come out of her" (ver. 18).

Acts XIX. The fact mentioned in vers. 11, 12, has the appearance of representing the "handkerchiefs or aprons," brought from the body of S. Paul, as acting in the way of *charms* upon the sick. I am willing to confess, that it may seem strange to find this account of a certain class of miraculous works; but I think that a little examination will shew, that the notion of a *charm* does not really enter into the history, but only as in other cases, that of the power of the Name of Christ. For in ver. 13, in which we read of the Jewish exorcists attempting to imitate the Pauline miracles, we find that they "took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the Name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth;" it would seem, then, that a reference to the sacred Name as the source of power was recognised as the basis of all wonderful works, and therefore I think we may conclude, that, in the case of the "handkerchiefs and aprons" also, though no distinct mention is made of the mode of using them, the application of them to the sick was with invocation of the Name of the Lord Jesus.

Acts xx. The revival of Eutychus is very briefly mentioned; my own impression from the history is, that there is here no miracle, but that the historian, in saying that he "was taken up dead," records only the belief of those who carried up Eutychus, stunned with his fall. This conclusion I draw from S. Paul's words in ver. 10.¹

I have now noticed all the miracles of the apostles recorded in the book of their Acts; they appear to me consistent with the view which I have given,—not testifying to inherent power like those of Christ, not preaching the names of the apostles, but re-echoing the Name of their Lord.

NOTE 23.

Theories of Inspiration are almost always liable to the objection that they appear to be framed for a particular purpose,—to be theological inventions rather than deductions from theological data. Take, as an example, the following given by Bishop Van Mildert:—"The kind of Inspiration, which it is here intended to vindicate, is that which may properly be called a *plenary* Inspiration; denoting by that term, that the sacred writers *constantly* received from the Holy Spirit such a degree of assistance, as might suffice to give to *every* part of Scripture its sanction and authority as *the Word of God*. To this end, it is not necessary to suppose, that the sacred writers were on every occasion favoured with direct communications from above; but rather that, under a Divine impulse, they at sundry times committed to writing supernatural truths, the knowledge of which, having been previously revealed to them, still remained impressed upon their minds: and that a further superintendence of the Holy Spirit was vouchsafed, for the purpose only of guarding them against any undue mixture of human opinions with those Divine truths. This seems fully sufficient to make the *whole* of Scripture binding upon us; without em-

¹ I observe that this is the view of Olshausen, with whom however I do not agree when he says, that it is a case altogether parallel with that of the raising of Jairus' daughter, concerning which Mr Trench's remarks seem to express the truth. Mr Alford says, "It seems to me, that the supposition of a mere suspended animation is as absurd here as in the miracle of Jairus' daughter;" to me, on the other hand, the whole spirit and character of the two narrations appear different; there is, however, no necessity for deciding the point positively either way, as also there would seem to be no actual ground for a decision.

barrassing the subject with needless difficulties.”¹ The expression here used, *this seems fully sufficient*, appears virtually to admit the fact, that certain points are to be covered by a theory, and that that theory is best which will cover them with the smallest number of hypotheses. Or take as another example the following from Bishop Warburton, who, after shewing the untenable character of the view described by him as *organic* inspiration, writes thus: “From the premises we can deduce no other notion of [inspiration] but this, That the Holy Spirit so directed the pens of these writers that no considerable error should fall from them:—by enlightening them with His immediate influence in all such matters as were necessary for the instruction of the Church, and which, either through ignorance or prejudice, they would otherwise have represented imperfectly, partially, or falsely; and by preserving them by the more ordinary means of providence, from any mistakes of consequence, concerning those things whereof they had acquired a competent knowledge by the common way of information. In a word, by watching over them incessantly; but with so suspended a hand, as permitted the use, and left them to the guidance, of their own faculties, while they kept clear of error; and then only interposing when, without this Divine assistance, they would have been in danger of falling.”² The difficulty of all such views of Inspiration is powerfully set forth in Coleridge’s *Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit*. An account of *Modern Theories of Inspiration* is given by Mr Lee in Appendix C. of his work on *The Inspiration of Holy Scripture*. The chapter on *Inspiration* in Morell’s *Philosophy of Religion*, is well worth reading, as the exhibition of the views of an Englishman of the school of Schleiermacher.

NOTE 24.

For an exposition of *The Immemorial Doctrine of the Church of God* on the subject of Inspiration, see Mr Lee’s Lecture bearing that title, being the second of his Lectures on *The Inspiration of Holy Scripture*. I do not perceive that anything said in that Lecture shakes the view advanced by myself. Mr Lee observes, “I shall not attempt here to give more than a

¹ *Boyle Lectures*. Sermon XXIII.

² *On the Office and Operations of the Holy Spirit*. Book I. Chap. VII.

rapid sketch of the nature and weight of the proofs which may be adduced; and I would merely observe, before entering upon this branch of my subject, that we must not expect to find in the annals of the early Church any such elaborate theory, or series of systematised propositions on the subject of Inspiration, as we meet with in the case of other doctrines. The absence, indeed, of dogmatic teaching on this question during the first fifteen centuries of the Church, affords a clear illustration of the harmony of opinion which prevailed respecting it; while the unhappy distractions of modern times sufficiently account for the want of any authoritative decision since the sacred precincts have been invaded." Does it not rather shew that the question is, as I have said, *an essentially modern question?*

See also Appendix B. of Mr Westcott's *Elements of the Gospel Harmony*.

NOTE 25.

The following passages from Davidson's *Sacred Hermeneutics*, will illustrate this paragraph:—"The first law we shall mention is, that *the Bible does not contradict itself*. If it proceed from God, it *must* be consistent with itself. It matters not through what instruments God has communicated His will, unless it be proved that they have corrupted or changed it. In the accomplishment of His purposes He may employ whatever agency He pleases. But, whether He make use of the unlettered or the learned, the high or the low, the revelation communicated is all His own, and *must* therefore harmonise in all its parts. Thus Luke *cannot* make a different statement from Paul, or Mark from John. They are to be regarded as the mere media of intercourse between the Creator and the creature. We look beyond them to the great Author of their inspiration. Every one will at once admit, that it is a law acknowledged by reason, that the Deity cannot state opposite things in different portions of His revelation."¹

Again, speaking of the inspired writers: "Some superintending care *must* have been exercised over them to prevent them from falling into error. What may have been the degree of this inspiration, it belongs not to us to inquire at present.

¹ p. 32.

One thing is certain, that truth *must* have been directly communicated. . . . We take it for granted, that the sacred penmen were kept from falling into any inconsistency in their compositions, *else their inspiration was absolutely valueless, &c. &c.*"¹

I the rather quote from this author, the value of whose writings (by the way) I by no means desire to disparage, for a reason which will be seen by reference to Note 29.

NOTE 26.

See Bishop Marsh's Lectures, *On the Criticism of the Bible*. Lectures III. and V.

As persons thought they could declare, *a priori*, the purity of the text of Scripture, so some imagined that they could, in like manner, assert what must be its style. "The honour of the sacred writers," says a writer in the *Christian Remembrancer*, "was thought to be impugned by their being suspected of having written in any other dialect than that of the purest Attic."—*Christian Remembrancer*, 1848, page 282; where see references and an account of the controversy.

NOTE 27.

On the question of the relation of Scripture to modern scientific discovery, I would refer the reader to Note C. in the Appendix to Professor Sedgwick's *Discourse on the Studies of the University of Cambridge*. There are few books which are more valuable, as a guide to manly thought upon this and cognate subjects.

NOTE 28.

It is perhaps almost unnecessary to refer to such books as Paley's *Horæ Paulinæ*, Blunt's *Scriptural Coincidences*, and Graves's *Lectures on the Pentateuch*, or Sir G. Wilkinson's *Ancient Egyptians*, and Mr Layard's various works on *Nineveh*, for the purpose of shewing how much the tendency of modern investigation has been to confirm the historical character of both Old and New Testaments. From what has been done already, it may be inferred as probable, that some of the historical difficulties still remaining will be cleared up by further

¹ p. 517.

knowledge. Nevertheless, it is perfectly gratuitous and very foolish to stake the character of Holy Scripture upon the assumption, that it *must* be free from historical inaccuracies. The practical mischief of such a notion will be illustrated in the next note.¹

NOTE 29.

I wish to exhibit in this note by an example the danger of *à priori* notions concerning what *must* be the law of the composition of Scripture. In Note 25 I gave a quotation from Davidson's *Sacred Hermeneutics*, in which certain assertions are made as to what *must* be the case with Scripture: now, in Kitto's *Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature*, there is an article upon the book of *Chronicles* by the same hand, and we there find what appears to me to be a very frightful application of Dr Davidson's principles, and a warning concerning the danger of the like. After speaking of some alleged discrepancies between the books of *Chronicles* and those of *Samuel* and *Kings*, which Dr Davidson does not allow to be real discrepancies, he goes on to remark, "Yet there are *real contradictions*. Thus,

2 Chron. viii. 18 . . . 1 Kings ix. 28,

1 Chron. xi. 11 . . . 2 Sam. xxiii. 8,

„ xxi. 5 . . . „ xxiv. 9, where the numbers
of Judah are different.

„ xviii. 4 . . . 2 Sam. viii. 4,

„ xix. 18 . . . „ x. 18,

and other places that might be quoted, present *real contradictions*. How, then, are they to be disposed of? To this we reply, that the text is corrupt. It is well known that the text of the books of *Samuel*, *Kings*, and *Chronicles* is in a worse condition than that of the other inspired writings. . . .

"It is time that the text of these historical books should be rectified in those instances, where an unquestionable necessity exists. If there be not manuscript evidence to warrant certain changes, we should not be deterred from making them. Common sense, the credit of the inspired writers, and, above all, their sacred authority, outweigh all scruples about correcting

¹ The great advantage to be derived in an attack upon the Bible from *à priori* views of inspiration has been quite appreciated by its enemies, as may be seen from Middleton's *Essay on the Gift of Tongues*, and Warburton's reply in Book I. Chap. VIII. of his *Discourse On the Office and Operations of the Holy Spirit*.

by *conjecture*. *Real contradictions* should never be allowed to tarnish a text, written under the immediate superintendence of the Holy Spirit. Errors committed by copyists should be at once removed, else evil-minded men may charge them on the original authors. . . .”

The plain English of this is, that, without manuscript authority, the text of historical books is to be tampered with, in order to present to the eye of persons not acquainted with the fraud practised an apparent harmony, which has no real existence. If any one should think that I have acted unwisely, in dealing as I have in these Lectures with theories concerning Inspiration, I might rest my apology upon a passage such as that above quoted; for here we have the actual example of a learned man proposing, in deference to a notion of his own concerning the character of Holy Writ, to falsify manuscript authorities, and thereby to shake, in the minds of those who are aware of the fact of the text having been tampered with, but are not aware of the extent to which the process may have been carried, the authority of the Scriptures as a whole.

Soon after preaching the Lecture to which this note refers, I received an anonymous letter, in which the writer says, “If you take so low a view of inspiration, you will make me an infidel. I have always believed the Bible to be true in every jot and tittle, and if I am induced to believe it to be otherwise, I cannot possibly take it for my guide and standard.” In general I make it a rule to take no notice of anonymous letters; nevertheless, as I have no reason to believe that the one in question was not a genuine expression of religious feeling, and as I would not willingly make a man an infidel because he does not sign his name, I will take this opportunity of referring the writer, and persons in the same state of mind as himself, to the preceding application of what would be called (I suppose) a *high* view of inspiration. When a person lays down the gratuitous hypothesis, that in the Holy Scriptures there *can* be no discrepancies, he may well ask with Dr Davidson, when he finds such actually existing, “How are they to be disposed of?” but is it not much more likely to make a man an infidel,—to shake his faith not in the Scriptures only, but in the principles of common honesty,—when he finds his only refuge, from the conclusions deducible from his hypothesis, in the proposal to tamper without authority with the text? But, in truth, why are the views

propounded in these Lectures to be called *low*, when the principle of them is simply this, not to assert that the Scriptures *must* be this or that, but to examine them, and see what they actually are?

As I have spoken strongly of the consequences, to my mind most deplorable, to which certain views concerning the meaning of *Inspiration* have conducted a man of real learning, I will take this opportunity of acknowledging the very useful work which Dr Davidson has performed in his *Sacred Hermeneutics*, by bringing together under one view the greater number of alleged discrepancies in Holy Scripture, and appending the probable mode of reconciling them.

I venture to add here an essay made by myself, some years ago, towards the removal of an apparent discrepancy between the books of Kings and Chronicles, partly because it is not included in the catalogue just now mentioned, partly because I wish to shew, that I am by no means blind to the duty of endeavouring to harmonise the different statements of Scripture, whenever it can be fairly done.

There appears at first sight to be a discrepancy between the accounts given in 1 Kings xxii. and 2 Chron. xx. of the building of ships by Jehoshaphat to go to Ophir for gold. The manner, however, in which the story is told in Chronicles, indicating as it does that it is not merely a variation of that in the book of Kings with a moral attached to it, but that the historian was drawing from some other independent source, seems to make it probable that the discrepancy is only apparent; and, in fact, the reconciliation of the two accounts does not seem difficult. The history in 1 Kings is, that—

Jehoshaphat made ships of Tarshish;
The ships went not,
But were broken at Ezion-geber;
Then Ahaziah proposed to send pilots,
But Jehoshaphat would not.

The history in 2 Chronicles is, that—

Jehoshaphat made ships in partnership with Ahaziah;
The ships were *made* at Ezion-gaber;
Eliezer, the son of Dodavah, rebuked Jehoshaphat for joining with Ahaziah;

The ships were broken so as not to be able to go to Tarshish. Now a cursory reading might lead us to fancy, that, according

to one account, Jehoshaphat refused the advances of Ahaziah, that according to the other his misfortune in losing his ships was due to his partnership. A more careful examination of the two stories, as above drawn out, will shew that this contradiction is not involved. 1 Kings does not say, that Jehoshaphat and Ahaziah built the ships in partnership, but neither does it state the contrary; it does not say, that the destruction was a judgment upon him for his sin in joining with Ahaziah, but it does not deny the same; what it does state is, that *after* the destruction of the fleet, Ahaziah proposed to supply pilots, and that this Jehoshaphat refused, as was not unlikely, if Eliezer, the son of Dodavah, had prophesied against him, as 2 Chron. tells us that he had. The necessity of having skilful pilots to take ships from Ezion-geber appears from 1 Kings ix. 26, 27.

On the whole it will be found, that the following account will include the two we possess, and not contradict either.

Jehoshaphat joined with Ahaziah in making ships of Tarshish; Eliezer, the son of Dodavah, rebuked him for his conduct, and prophesied the destruction of the ships.

The ships were accordingly destroyed at Ezion-geber, the place where they were built.

Then Ahaziah proposed to make another attempt by building a new fleet, and using his pilots; but this, Jehoshaphat, warned by experience, refused.

It is implied, that in the first attempt Ahaziah's pilots were not employed; and it may seem strange, that he should not make the same proposal the first time as the second; but this may be explained thus: it is possible that Jehoshaphat intended, in the first instance, to work the ships in partnership with Ahaziah, as he had built them, but that he was alarmed by Eliezer's prophecies; then, when the ships were wrecked, Ahaziah would probably suggest, that the expedition would have succeeded, if his sailors had been employed, and would laugh at Jehoshaphat's religious scruples: or it is possible, that Jehoshaphat might strain his conscience to accept of the assistance of Ahaziah on firm land, but might think idolaters and schismatics a dangerous cargo, and so might never have intended that the partnership should go beyond the *building* of the ships.

Viewed in this way, the accounts given of the transaction in 1 Kings and 2 Chron., not only do not clash, but throw considerable light upon each other.

NOTE 30.

A very valuable account of the various views, which have been propounded concerning the formation of the Gospels, will be found in the introduction to the English translation of *Schleiermacher on S. Luke's Gospel*, by the translator, (the present Bishop of S. David's). The work itself is also of extraordinary value to any one, who is considering the question of the manner in which the Gospels come to be such as they are, and of their mutual relations.

The difficulty of arriving at any conclusion which shall be universally received may be illustrated, by comparing the tone in which Schleiermacher speaks of S. Mark's Gospel with the following sentence from Thiersch's *History of the Christian Church*: "Mark's Gospel is the oldest and shortest, the common basis for those of Matthew and Luke."¹ But this very difficulty ought to arrest our attention, and to teach us to look therein for marks of the care of God for the welfare of His Church.

I need hardly refer the reader for information upon this subject to Mr Alford's *Prolegomena* to the first volume of his edition of the New Testament.

NOTE 31.

Prophecy used to be regarded, and by many is still regarded, as a strong ground of Christian evidences. It is perhaps hardly necessary to refer to such books as *Newton on the Prophecies*, *Sherlock*, and *Davidson*: and the reader may see, if he wishes, the difficulties which ingenuity can raise on the subject, in Greg's *Creed of Christendom* (chap. iv.) I do not wish to insinuate, that prophecy is not a part of Christian evidence; this it must be, if it be a part of the divine economy in the revelation of Jesus Christ; but the argument, that certain men announced beforehand things which afterwards came to pass, and were therefore inspired, is certainly accompanied with difficulties. We perhaps still want a satisfactory treatise upon the subject. There is much matter of interest bearing on the question in Mr Maurice's *Prophets and Kings of the Old Testament*, in

¹ English Translation, Vol. i. p. 44. See also the Essay *On the Sources of S. Luke's Writings*, in Smith's *Voyage and Shipwreck of S. Paul*, and the *Dissertation on the Origin and Connexion of the Gospels*, by the same Author.

the Advertisement prefixed to which he says, "The compilers of the Lessons have been much more careful to exhibit the Prophets as preachers of righteousness, than as mere predictors. I have felt that this aspect of their lives has been greatly overlooked in our day, and that there is none which we have more need to contemplate. The history of the Hebrew Monarchy, without the light which it receives from Jewish prophecy, seems to me as unintelligible and incoherent, as it does to those who reject it or try to reconstruct it. Seen by that light, I can find nothing more orderly or continuous, nothing more consistent with itself or more helpful in interpreting the modern world."

NOTE 32.

I think that the tone of this paragraph ought to have protected me from the suspicions, at which I have hinted in the opening of the following Lecture. Ancients and Moderns, Romanists and Protestants, Church-of-England writers and Dissenters, have all agreed in finding mysteries beneath the surface of Scripture when devoutly studied; and the effect produced upon the mind by such devout reading, is probably in the greater number of cases the strongest practical argument for the divine character of the book; the value of the argument, however, immediately evaporates, when an attempt is made to give it a scientific form, appreciable by those who have not studied the book in the same way. The prayer of the Psalmist is the right prayer for every reader of the Scriptures, *Open Thou mine eyes, that I may see the wonderful things of Thy law*: and the very necessity for such a prayer shews, that the Scriptures have a power of self-demonstration to those whose eyes have been purged to look into them aright, which they have not for others. "Totius Ecclesiæ," says S. Augustine, "una sententia est, esse quidem omnem Legem spiritualem; non tamen ea quæ spirat Lex esse hominibus nota, nisi iis solum quibus gratia Spiritus sancti in verbo sapientiæ ac scientiæ condonatur."¹

I may take this opportunity of referring to a sermon on the *Inspiration of Scripture*, by the Rev. C. P. Eden, the spirit of which is admirable, and with the concluding sentences of which I cordially agree. "I am not sure that since the days of the

¹ *De Incarnatione Verbi.*

Arian dispute, a more important question has arisen than that which seems likely to be ere long forcing itself upon us, of the Inspiration of Holy Writ. I freely permit myself to anticipate that *the simplest possible view of the subject, that on which rich and poor may meet together, is the one to which we shall come round*: and how? by our getting to know more deeply,—that which men do err by not knowing,—the Scriptures and the power of God.”¹

NOTE 33.

In speaking of Hooker, I of course refer to the beautiful passage concerning the Psalms in the fifth book of the *Ecclesiastical Polity*.² S. Augustine, in expounding Psalm xxx., says, “Si orat Psalmus, orate; et si gemit, gemite; et si gratulatur, gaudete; et si sperat, sperate; et si timet, timete. Omnia enim, quæ hic conscripta sunt, speculum nostrum sunt.” And again in his *Confessions*³ he writes—“Quas tibi, Deus meus, voces dedi, cum legerem Psalmos David, cantica fidelia, et sonos pietatis excludentes turgidum spiritum? . . . Quas tibi voces dabam in psalmis illis, et quomodo in te inflammabar ex eis, et accendebar eos recitare, si possem, toto orbe terrarum, adversus typhum generis humani? Et tamen toto orbe cantantur, et non est qui se abscondat a calore tuo.” In the same chapter he uses the beautiful expression—“Litteras de melle cæli melleas, et de lumine tuo luminosas.”

Hengstenberg says, “Even the French Deists, the theophilanthropists, sworn enemies of the Bible, could only make out their Liturgy by help of the Psalms. This [that is, the testimony borne to the Being and perfections of God,] is one chief reason why the Psalter is so precious to the afflicted. It presents God so clearly and vividly before their eyes, that they see Him, in a manner, with their bodily sight, and find thereby the sting taken from their pains. In this, too, lies one great element of the importance of the Psalter for the present times. What men now most of all need is, that the blanched image (verblichene Bild) of God should be freshened up in them. This, not the denial of particular tenets of revelation, which is only a consequence of the other, and which can never be

¹ *Sermons preached at S. Mary's in Oxford.* Sermon IX.

² *Eccles. Pol.* v. chap. xxxvii. § 2.

³ *Lib.* ix. cap. iv.

thoroughly eradicated so long as the fundamental evil remains, is the deepest grief of the Church, and one which believers will still have to bear with. Those who would strive to effect, in this respect, a reformation in themselves or others, will find in the Psalms a mighty help. The more closely we connect ourselves with them, the more will God cease to be to us a shadowy form, which can neither hear, nor help, nor judge us, and to which we can present no supplication."¹

NOTE 34.

"En vertu de cette mission divine *Manichée* osa rejeter le Vieux Testament, et réformer le Nouveau."²

NOTE 35.

See Butler's *Analogy*, Part II. chap. iii.,—a chapter worthy of the most careful study, and of which the following sentence is the key:—"If the natural and the revealed dispensation of things are both from God, if they coincide with each other, and together make up one scheme of Providence; our being incompetent judges of one, must render it credible that we may be incompetent judges also of the other. Since, upon experience, the acknowledged constitution and course of nature is proved to be greatly different from what, before experience, would have been expected; and such as, men fancy, there lie great objections against: this renders it beforehand highly credible, that they may find the revealed dispensation likewise, if they judge of it as they do of the constitution of nature, very different from expectations formed beforehand; and liable, in appearance, to great objections."

NOTE 36.

With regard to the paragraphs which follow I desire to acknowledge my obligations to Mr Maurice, especially to his little volume of *Sermons on the Old Testament*, or, as it is called in the second edition lately published, *Patriarchs and Lawgivers of the Old Testament*, some of which seem to me to be

¹ Hengstenberg's *Commentary on the Psalms*. Appendix I. § vii. (Clark's English Edition.)

² Beausobre, *Hist. Crit. de Manichée et du Manichéisme*. Preface.

amongst the most valuable of his writings,—obligations, of course, not for particular passages or arguments, but for the general tone of thought.

NOTE 37.

“It is obvious to every one, that there is something quite different in the Old Testament declarations, that God made a covenant with Noah and Abraham, led His people out of Egypt, gave them laws, brought them into the promised land, raised up for them judges, kings, and prophets, and punished them at last for their disobedience by exile;—from the tales concerning Jupiter, that he was born at Rhea in Crete, and hidden from his father Saturn in a cave. . . . The essential difference between the two representations is, that in the latter, the Deity himself is the subject of progression, becomes another being at the end of the process from what He was at the beginning, something being effected in Himself, and for His own sake : whilst in the former, change takes place only on the side of the world ; God remains fixed in His own identity as the I AM, and the temporal is only a superficial reflexion cast back upon His acting energy by that course of mundane events which He both originates and guides. In the heathen mythology the gods have a history : in the Old Testament God Himself has none, but only His people : and if the proper meaning of mythology be the history of gods, then the Hebrew religion has no mythology.”¹

On the Pagan *Theogonia*, see Cudworth, *Intel. Syst.* Book i. chap. iv. § xiv.

NOTE 38.

There is very much valuable matter bearing upon the subject of this paragraph, in Coleridge's *Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit*. I quote one passage. “All men of learning,” Coleridge supposes “a spiritual physician” to say to one who has been shaken by the assaults of infidelity,—“all men of learning, even learned unbelievers, admit that the greater part of the objections, urged in the popular works of Infidelity, to this or that verse or chapter of the Bible, prove only the ignorance

¹ Strauss, *Leben Jesu*. English Translation. Introduction, § 14.

or the dishonesty of the objectors. But let it be supposed for a moment that a few remain hitherto unanswered,—nay, that to your judgment and feelings they appear unanswerable. What follows? That the Apostles' and Nicene Creed is not credible, the Ten Commandments not to be obeyed, the clauses of the Lord's Prayer not to be desired, or the Sermon on the Mount not to be practised? See how the logic would look. David cruelly tortured the inhabitants of Rabbah, and in several of the Psalms he invokes the bitterest curses on his enemies: therefore it is not to be believed, that *the love of God towards us was manifested in sending His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him*. Or: Abijah is said to have collected an army of 400,000 men, and Jeroboam to have met him with an army of 800,000, each army consisting of chosen men, and making together a host of 1,200,000, and Abijah to have slain 500,000 out of the 800,000: therefore, the words which admonish us that *if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another*, even our enemies, yea, *to bless them that curse us*, and to *do good to them that hate us*, cannot proceed from the Holy Spirit. Or: the first six chapters of the Book of Daniel contain several words and phrases irreconcilable with the commonly received dates, and these chapters and the Book of Esther have a traditionally and legendary character unlike that of the other historical books of the Old Testament: therefore, these historical books, by contrast with which the former appear suspicious, and the historical document, 1 Cor. xv. 1-8, are not to be credited."¹

We have already seen (Note 29) the expedients to which learned and well-meaning men may be driven, by the difficulties arising from particular theories of inspiration; the preceding passage will shew how entirely inapplicable such difficulties are to him, who sees in the Bible the work of the Spirit, because it is the record of the revelation of the Father in the person of the Incarnate Son.

I will here take the opportunity of making a remark upon the use of the passage, 1 Tim. iii. 16, in page 117, and I think in other passages of these Lectures. Dean Milman remarks, in a note upon a sneering observation in Gibbon (chap. xlvii.), that "the weight of authority is so much against the common

¹ Letter vi.

reading on both these points, (*i.e.* 1 Tim. iii. 16, and 1 John v. 7), that they are no longer urged by prudent controversialists." My intention, in referring to the text in S. Paul's Epistle to Timothy, was, not to imply that the doctrine rested upon that text, (which, indeed, would be a very unsafe support for such a doctrine,) but only to quote a verse, which (as it stands in our Bibles) expresses concisely the doctrine, of which the whole New Testament is full.

NOTE 39.

Χρὴ δὲ γινώσκειν, ὅτι ὁ μὲν Παῦλος ὁ Σαμοσατεὺς οὕτω φησιν, "ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ κρίσιν ποιεῖν, ὅτι υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ἐστίν" ἀλλ' οὐδεμίαν ἀκολουθίαν ἔχει. Οὐ γὰρ διὰ τοῦτο ἔλαβε κρίσιν, ὅτι ἀνθρωπός ἐστιν, ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ τῆς ἀρρήτου οὐσίας ἐκείνης ἐστὶν υἱὸς, διὰ τοῦτο ἐστὶ καὶ κριτὴς· οὕτω τοῖνυν ἀναγνώστειον, "Ὅτι υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ἐστὶ, μὴ θαυμάζετε τοῦτο."¹

Since writing this Lecture I have noticed the following passage in Wilberforce's *Doctrine of the Incarnation*:—

"The same infallible Scriptures which declare salvation to the penitent, through the blood of the Incarnate Mediator, declare that God 'hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.' Except for His gracious intervention in the world of created beings, our race had perished in its birth; it had been incapable of trial and glory. The Incarnation of the Son of God involves examination, and makes acquittal possible. But then it teaches the certainty of the trial. The very office of a judge is to examine into actions; and to assign this function to one who is characterised by participation in our material nature, if it shews the leniency with which we may hope that judgment will be exercised, shews also its reality and literal truth."²

Mr Alford takes the view given by our English version. See his note.

See also a very elaborate discussion in Lücke's *Commentary*; from which I will quote two short passages.

"Bey ὅτι υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ἐστὶν fragen wir nach der Structur und Interpunction. Das natürlichste scheint, den Satz als Causalsatz mit dem Vorhergehenden zu verbinden. So construiren auch

¹ Quoted from Cramer's *Catena*.

² p. 534.

schon Origenes, Paul von Samosata, wie Chrysostomus bemerkt, nachmahls Cyrill, Nonnus und die Lateiner alle. Allein Chrysostomus und nach ihm Euthymius und Theophylakt verbinden, wie die beyden Syr. Uebersetzungen, den Satz mit dem folgenden *μη θανατώσετε τούτο. . . .*

“Es bleibt also nur übrig, die stelle so zu verstehen, dass der Vater dem Sohne das Gericht übergeben habe, entweder *weil er der Messias sey und das Gericht wesentlich zum Messianischen ἔργον gehöre*, oder *weil er Menschensohn sey, d. h. der Menschgewordene Logos*. Diess letztere ist die Erklärung von *de Wette*.”

See also Olshausen, who refers for an explanation to Daniel vii. 13, and does not admit that *υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου* = *ἄνθρωπος*. He observes, however, that the connexion of the words with the following verse, as proposed by some of the Fathers, and by Dr Paulus amongst the moderns, is altogether inadmissible.

NOTE 40.

The following extract from Bishop Colenso's *Ten Weeks in Natal*, will illustrate my meaning:—

“I read the following passage upon a scrap of an American Missionary Intelligencer. It was the report of a colporteur, who was describing to his employers the manner in which he conducted his ministry, entering first into one house and then another, and distributing according to the necessities of each. In one, for instance, he would find the people careless and negligent in divine things, and then he would talk to them about the *heathen*, and what would become of *them*; and would ask them what would become of themselves, if they lived like heathen. They would perish *like those heathen*; and their children, about whom they thought so much, would twine about them, like creepers on a gnarled oak, and they would burn—burn—burn on, for ever!”

“Here is another passage from the correspondence of a Missionary. Speaking of the heathen, the writer says; ‘Every hour, yea, every moment, they are dying; and dying, most of them, without any knowledge of the Saviour. On whom now rests the responsibility? If you fail to do all in your power to save them, will you stand at the judgment

guiltless of their blood? Said a heathen child, after having embraced the Gospel, to the writer, ‘How long have they had the Gospel in New England?’ When told, she asked, with great earnestness, ‘Why did they not come and tell us before?’ and then added, ‘My mother died, and my father died, and my brother died, without the Gospel!’ Here she was unable to restrain her emotions. But, at length, wiping away her tears, she asked, ‘Where do you think they have gone?’ I, too could not refrain from weeping, and, turning to her, I inquired, ‘Where do *you* think they have gone?’ She hesitated a few moments, and then replied, with much emotion, ‘I suppose they have gone down to the dark place—the dark place. Oh! why did they not tell us before?’ It wrung my heart, as she repeated the question,—Why did they not tell us before?’

“I quote these passages, not for a moment wishing it to be supposed, that the good American Missionaries of Natàl hold and preach, as a body, these fearful doctrines—God forbid!—but to enter my own solemn protest against them, as utterly contrary to the whole spirit of the Gospel, &c.” . . .¹

I entirely sympathise in the Bishop’s protest, and have quoted the preceding paragraphs the rather, because the character of such doctrine comes out in much stronger colours, when seen in its practical bearing upon a little converted heathen girl, weeping (as well she might under such teaching) over her father and mother, than when exhibited in the dry form of a theological dogma in the pages of a learned divine.

NOTE 41.

The reader may refer if he will to Thomas Aquinas, *Summ. Theol.* Pars Tertia. Quæst. LII. *De descensu Christi ad Inferos*, where he will find such questions as these discussed, *Utrum Christus descendens ad inferos sanctos Patres inde liberaverit. Utrum Christus aliquos damnatos ab inferno liberaverit. Utrum pueri qui cum originali peccato decesserant fuerint à Christo liberati. Utrum Christus suo adscensu liberaverit animas a purgatorio.* He will find all these questions logically resolved, and will see a good illustration of “the danger of theorising in a matter essentially beyond human cognisance.” Pearson says

¹ *Ten Weeks in Natàl*, p. 251.

"I conclude that there is no certainty of truth in that proposition, which the schoolmen take for a matter of faith, That Christ delivered the souls of the saints from that place of Hell, which they call *Limbus of the Fathers*, into Heaven." The notes to Pearson's discussion of the Article, *He descended into Hell*, are full of illustrations of the same point, drawn from the speculations of the Fathers.

NOTE 42.

By saying that the certainty of a judgment can only be denied upon principles of the grossest materialism, I mean to assert, that unless a person hold (as very few do in the present day) that the dissolution of the body puts an end to the entire being of a human creature, he cannot but admit that which amounts in principle to a judgment. For if the entire being be not dissolved, that is, if men live after death, their condition, whatever it be, cannot be conceived as being entirely unconnected with their condition in this life : the one must be in the nature of things (to use a mathematical and expressive phrase) a *function* of the other. Now if we admit as much as this, we admit that which is tantamount to a judgment ; we of course arrive at no knowledge of the organisation of the judgment, but we allow of the reality of a future state of things to be determined by the deeds of this present life ; that is, we do in fact confess a judgment.

NOTE 43.

I observe, that I have here adopted a form of expression used by Professor Sedgwick, who says, "Is it not notorious, that scoffing men, reasoning on like grounds and with like fallacy, have impugned the benevolence of God,—have profanely dared to *entangle the great First Cause in a dilemma* ; pretending to prove, from the misery and desolation they saw around them, that He either wanted goodness or wanted power."¹

NOTE 44.

There are some very valuable remarks on the effects of mathematical study, in a paper presented by Mr R. L. Ellis to the Cambridge University Commission. I shall probably be

¹ *Discourse on the Studies of the University*, p. 61.

doing good service by exhuming a few of them from the centre of a parliamentary Blue-Book. Speaking of the grounds, upon which "the study of mathematics is made to form part of our system of education," Mr. Ellis observes :

"The grounds are twofold : mathematics are studied as an auxiliary to natural philosophy, and as a means of training and developing the mind. In the latter point of view they are chiefly valuable, because they deal with necessary and not contingent truth. Of every necessarily true proposition which the mind distinctly apprehends as such, the contradiction is seen to be inconceivable ; this inconceivableness of the contrary being *ex parte mentis* the criterion of necessary truth. Nevertheless, although when we think of any simple proposition in arithmetic or geometry, we perceive not merely that it is true, but that it must of necessity be so, this is nowise the case with respect to all demonstrated or demonstrable results. The intuition, so to speak, of the ablest mathematician is confined within a narrower circle than that of the truths which he can prove. He may satisfy himself of the cogency of each step of the demonstration, and yet the essence of the conclusion—the fundamental principle of its truth—remains unseen. The $\sigma\tau\iota$ is manifest, but the $\delta\iota\acute{o}\tau\iota$ obscure ; and consequently a proposition, contradictory to that to which he has been led, does not appear to him as an absurdity, but simply as an untruth. It might, for what he sees, have been true, though he knows that actually it is not ; and thus while he is aware that his conclusion is true necessarily, yet still it seems as if it were so only contingently and as a matter of fact, the demonstration appearing *assensum constringere, non rem*. In a word, his conception of the matter is still imperfect. But between this state of mind and that which is produced by the contemplation of any elementary proposition, there is no fixed or definite boundary. Every one, who has really studied mathematics, must remember cases in which, after long and patient thought, the reason of the truth of a proposition, with the demonstration of which he may have been acquainted for years, has seemed to dawn on him ; the proposition thenceforth becoming as it were, a part of his own mind,—a matter concerning which he is no more capable of doubting, than about the primary conceptions of form and magnitude. The mind thus brought into nearer, if not immediate, contact with necessary truth, is conscious of its own development ; and herein, I believe,

resides the special benefit to be derived from the study of mathematics, a benefit, that is, distinct from the exercise of patience and attention which it undoubtedly requires, but which is required also in other pursuits. The study of mathematics is especially valuable, not because it gives the student practice in ratiocination, but because it enlarges the sphere of his intuition, by giving him distinct and conscious possession of truths which lay hid in his conceptions of figure, number, and the like. But in order to this kind of mental development, it is necessary not only that the student should master the successive steps of the demonstrations set before him and retain them in his memory, but that his mind should become imbued with their spirit and essence. His real progress therefore is not to be measured simply by the extent of ground over which he has passed: it varies also according to the degree in which he has approached towards a complete intuition into the results which he is able to prove."

Leibnitz says of Mathematics :

On ne doit point s'étonner que je tâche d'éclaircir ces choses par des comparaisons prises des mathématiques pures, où tout va dans l'ordre, et où il y a moyen de les démêler par une méditation exacte, *qui nous fait jouir*, pour ainsi dire, *de la vue des idées de Dieu*.¹

NOTE 45.

I allude chiefly to Professor Sedgwick's *Discourse on the Studies of the University*, to which reference has been made before, and which in its last edition, preceded by a copious preface and followed by equally copious notes, is a repertory of valuable thought which ought to be in the hands of every Cambridge man.

NOTE 46.

I may refer for such speculations to Dr Buckland's *Bridge-water Treatise*, Chap. II.: Sumner's *Records of Creation*: Dr J. Pye Smith's *Relation between the Holy Scriptures and some parts of Geological Science*.

Philo says of Moses: τὴν γένεσιν ἀνέγραψε, μάλα σεμνῶς θεολογήσας.²

¹ *Théodicée*, § 242.

² *De Mundi Opif.*

NOTE 47.

Take for example the amount of knowledge of the cosmos contained in the second and third sections of Newton's *Principia*; these may be said to contain the firstfruits, and only the firstfruits, of the abundant harvest which will reward the patience of a man, who has toiled thus far in the path of exact science. But even if a student go no further, what a very sterling treasure is this which he has found already! To know Kepler's laws as the result of observation, and then to find them all linked together and resulting from simple geometrical and mechanical principles, is truly to know something of the wonders of God's handiwork; and it ought to be observed, in the first place, that this knowledge is altogether different in kind from any that can be acquired from popular books giving the results of investigations, and in the second place, that the knowledge is within the reach of men of average abilities, with average opportunities of improving them.

Note 48.

See Mr Newman's very striking Sermon, entitled *The Philosophical Temper, first enjoined in the Gospel*, being the first in his volume of *University Sermons*.

Note 49.

I remember hearing the late Dr Mill express himself to the effect described in the paragraph to which this note is appended, but have been unable to find the passage in his published Sermons. The argument, however, is given in the conclusion of Note B on Sermon IV. of those preached in Advent and Christmas-tide, 1846. "In the view of those who have gone out from us," wrote Dr Mill, "and who evince a disposition very different from that of the best Roman Catholics upon such matters, there is no reason why these contradictions to primitive antiquity [the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of S. John] should not be accepted as legitimate developments of doctrine; or why the verity of S. John's assumption should not be considered even as a logical deduction from that of her, to whom the Divine Word had made him

a son. Such proceedings were worthy of those, who contend earnestly that what was no part of the original deposit of faith, may be made such at the present or any future time: and who, as the most decisive example of this, anticipate with undisguised pleasure the coming sanction, as an article of faith, of the Virgin Mary's conception without sin. From that moment it seems that it will be *heresy* to adopt the sentiments and arguments of S. Bernard and S. Thomas Aquinas on that matter; and the Catholic world will be called on to surrender and deny, on the pain of anathema, what all the Fathers of the Church esteemed the Blessed Virgin's incommunicable and most sacred prerogative, that of the *sole immaculate MATERNITY*; to declare that it was shared by the Virgin's wedded mother; and why not eventually by her mother also, and the mother of Joachim, and so on without limit? For who can set any limit to the development of presumptuous disquisition on the text, that to educe a clean thing from an unclean is impossible?"

NOTE 50.

The paragraphs which follow contain part of the substance of a sermon preached by me in Great S. Mary's Church, on the occasion of the Meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, in June, 1845. In that sermon I said, "that he who feels practically the want of some light upon the mystery of his being will find it most easily by meditating on the Life of our Lord, and that the best guide to the Philosophy of Life is the Creed of the Catholic Church;" those who think thus will consider, that the subject touched upon in the paragraphs referred to is one, upon which too much thought can hardly be expended.

NOTE 51.

This matter has already been referred to in Note 3; which see.

I have in Note 29 illustrated the danger of *a priori* theories of Inspiration by reference to a proposal made in the article *Chronicles*, in Kitto's *Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature*, to produce an apparent uniformity of statement in different historical books of the Bible by alterations without MS. authority.

Facts of this kind may also be alleged, in illustration of the danger arising from even an apparent deviation from the great highroad of truth. With the same view we may also here again refer to the same article. In combating the difficulty which attaches to the supposition of Ezra having been the author of the Books of Chronicles, arising from the fact of the genealogy of Zerubbabel being brought down to a period later than that of Ezra, the writer remarks, "was it not possible, however, for Ezra to write the portion in question? if he was inspired, as we believe, is there aught to forbid the supposition that such knowledge was directly communicated to him? The fact of his inspiration is quite sufficient to account for his recording the genealogy of Zerubbabel." On behalf of such a view the writer might no doubt quote S. Augustine, who maintained the notion of the Psalms having been all written by David, notwithstanding similar chronological difficulties. "Nec movere debet ad hoc non credendum, quod nonnullorum nomina Prophetarum, qui longe post David regis tempora fuerunt, quibusdam psalmis in eo libro leguntur inscripta; et quæ ibi dicuntur velut ab eis dici videntur. Neque enim non potuit propheticus Spiritus prophetanti regi David hæc etiam futurorum Prophetarum nomina revelare, ut aliquid, quod eorum personæ conveniret, propheticæ cantaretur."¹ The fact however of Augustine having used such an argument seems to me only an illustration of what I have said in Lecture V. (p. 80), namely, that the peculiar difficulties of the doctrine of Inspiration arise from the habits of modern thought; and I feel convinced that nothing can be more mischievous, than to render all criticism of the Sacred Writings impossible, (which is the necessary result,) by this summary mode of dealing with difficulties.

With regard to the extravagant views, to which men may be driven by zeal for the truth of Revelation, see Notes C and E in the Appendix to Prof. Sedgwick's *Discourse*.

NOTE 52.

In writing this sentence I had in my mind a passage in a speech of M. de Montalembert, in the French Assembly, on the education question (reported in the *Guardian* of January 23, 1850). Speaking of scepticism, M. de Montalembert said,

¹ *De Civ. Dei*, Lib. xvii. Cap. xiv.

“Messieurs, croyez bien que je suis à mille lieues de vouloir poursuivre le scepticisme dans le secret des âmes—rien n’est plus loin de ma pensée. Quand je me trouve en présence de ces âmes ravagées, je m’incline avec une sorte de respect, si je puis employer ce mot, comme devant une grande infortune ou devant une grande indigence.”

END OF THE NOTES.

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